

SELINA,
A NOVEL,
FOUNDED ON FACTS.


BY A LADY.


IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

————— Is there not a hand,
Which operates unseen, and regulates
The vast machine we tread on?

DR. HURDIS.

L O N D O N :

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SELINA.

“NO sooner was my husband gone, than I gave way to all the grief and sorrow, with which my heart was loaded. I wept with bitterness, nor could I, for the whole day, compose my spirits.— It was in the power of my innocent child alone to comfort me, or soften the horror of this dreary solitude; but at length my sorrow and my resentment, for this was not the least of the passions with which I strove, being subdued, or rather having resigned

myself to my fate, I by degrees became tolerably cheerful, though I felt the time pass very heavily.

“ Not knowing how to employ myself, and having no books to divert me, with the assistance of my maid I set about repairing the tapestry, both in the sitting-room, and bed-chamber; with the former I succeeded so well, that in less than a fortnight it wore a very different appearance. I took from my wardrobe several superfluous articles of dress, and converted them into ornaments for my apartments, which gave them some little semblance of elegance. I also began to prepare for my lying-in; and knowing, that I should then want an additional room, determined to search over the castle for a tolerably decent one.

“ The

“The weather had hitherto been so piercingly cold and tempestuous, as to take from me even the wish of quitting the fire-side; and the language of my host and his grand-daughter (my hostess I had not yet seen, she being confined with the rheumatism) was so unintelligible, that it was impossible to indulge my curiosity by asking questions. However, I commenced my intended search, and, accompanied by my maid, who had my little darling in her arms, ventured to explore the castle.

“We went immediately from my apartments across a wide stair-case into a large antique hall, adorned with the military ensigns of former times. Near the upper end a seat was raised in the middle above the others, as if it had been originally a court of justice. Here we met Winifred the grand-daughter, to whom we gave the

child, as she began to cry with cold. We then proceeded up a flight of stone stairs, which were so decayed, that we were almost fearful of venturing. We scrambled up them as well as we could, and, when we arrived at the top, opened a door, which led to a battlement, that overlooked the sea. I had often heard it's surges roar, but had no idea of it's being so near: our coming to the castle so late at night, and the weather since having prevented my satisfying my curiosity: add to this the immense height of the windows, and my being in no condition to clamber, hindered my finding our exact situation. I was struck with horror as I now surveyed it.

“ The castle was seated upon a high rocky cliff, at the extremity of which it stood, which jutted so considerable a way
over

over it's base, that it seemed to require only one high wave to wash us into the sea. The view we had of this tremendous element was immense, varied only here and there by long ridges of dreadful rocks, the heads of which appeared in frightful irregularity above water, while the sea beat upon them with almost unceasing violence.

“ It appeared to me, that this castle had been the residence of some powerful baron, as the battlements, rampart, and a round tower, which stood on one side of the rampart, bore evident marks of having formerly been in a state of defence. I could hardly bear to cast my eyes downwards, lest, as poor Edgar says, ‘ the deficient sight should topple down headlong ! ’ — ‘ To what a horrible place are we consigned ! ’ said I to the maid, whose teeth chattered

in her head from affright, as mine did from cold.

“ Dreadful indeed !” she returned ; ‘ I wonder why master brought us to such a barbarous looking place : I dare say it is haunted, and that ghosts walk here every night. I wish, with all my heart, I had never come to it : I am sure, if we are not frightened to death by spectres, we shall be washed into the sea.’

“ Ridiculous !” I returned, half angry at the tone of voice in which she spoke, though I could not resist smiling at her idea of ghosts, ‘ are you foolish enough to believe, that the spirits of the dead can rise to torment or frighten you ?’

“ Believe !” she replied, staring ; ‘ ah, madam, that I do ; for my mother often told me of a lady’s ghost, that was seen walking

walking round Barton church-yard of a night.'

"Peace, Mary," said I; 'of supernatural appearances I have no dread. Let us not, however, waste our time in imagining such absurdities, but continue our route.'

"That stupid old man and woman," said Mary, muttering, 'might tell us where to go; but they can speak nothing but nasty welch jargon: for my part, I wish I was safe in London once more; I am sure I would never come again on such a wild goose scheme. If your ladyship likes to risk yourself, I do not know why I should. I know, if we disturb the ghost, and make it angry with us, it will plague us all our lives.'

"Mary," said I, gravely, 'did you ever hear this place was haunted?'

“ Why, yes—no, madam,’ said she hesitatingly, only a man, that came into the kitchen the other day, asked me in english, plain english, ma’am, how I liked the place? and if I had been to the western tower yet? saying, that some miss, I forget her name, walked there every night, and day too, ma’am. And I know,’ she continued, ‘that it is a very dangerous thing, to vex or disturb a ghost.’

“ There is no such thing as a ghost,’ I returned, ‘and if there were, there is no occasion to fear in the day time. But come, I will go first, and then, if there be any danger, I shall first encounter it.’

“ With evident fear and great reluctance, she followed me to the tower. Having opened the outer door, I ascended the steps, which wound round like a corkscrew. At length we reached the top, and
with

with much difficulty opened a door, that presented itself. I was surprized to find the room, to which it afforded admission, bore evident marks of being inhabited. It contained a couch, two chairs, a table, and the hearth had not long before had a fire in it. On the table lay a perspective glass; and scattered about the room were charts of different harbours on the coast of France.

“ This place is not so desolate as we thought,” said I, in a faltering tone of voice; “ and I think it cannot long since have had a resident. But be in no fear, Mary, it is an earthly one. We will return; it is the apartment either of a thief or a hermit.”

“ Madam,” said she, interrupting me, “ if he comes while we are here, he will certainly murder us !”

B. 5

“ Though

“ Though not exactly of her opinion, I began to think there was some reason in what she said, and felt as eager to return as she could. As we descended, missing the door which led to the battlement, we continued going downward, till at length I found we had actually gotten into the cavern, at the foot of the rock, on which the castle was seated. We were now so terrified, as scarcely to be able to attempt to return, or to go forward ; yet, impelled by some particular impulse, unknowing what to do, I still went on, till we were so completely bewildered among the caves, as to have totally lost all clue to the place from which we descended.

“ At length we saw a door, which we opened, and the mystery was presently solved, as from the different articles we discovered, it became plain, that this was a receptacle for contraband goods ;

and I no longer doubted, but the chamber we had visited was the occasional residence at least of smugglers. Terrified lest they should discover, that we were acquainted with their retreat, I stood for some minutes reflecting how we should get back to the castle. The sound of approaching voices almost bereft me of even the power of thinking. I dreaded falling into the hands of men, whose trade made them acquainted with every excess, and who generally sought a severe revenge upon those that betrayed them.

“ I stopped in breathless expectation, listening to the sound in dreadful suspense; at length it died away, they having gone, I suppose, to some other cavern. Fearful of quitting the place, lest they should see me, I remained for some time; when, finding all was quiet, I ventured back, and, after groping about a long time, gained

the door, but fright and exertion had almost deprived me of the power of opening it. As we tremblingly advanced, I was certain I heard a step over head. Being now more convinced of the truth of my suspicions, without daring to hazard even asking the maid whether she had heard the same, I hurried on, and hastily crossing the rampart, returned to our apartment.

“ On my return, I was surprised to see a man of genteel appearance, but plainly dressed, sitting by the fire. He rose at my entrance, told me his name was Davis, and that he had called by the desire of a gentleman, who had some time before requested him to make the Castle in his rounds ; but, having been indisposed with a fit of the gout, and understanding, that no very pressing business required his immediate attendance, he had delayed waiting on me

me longer than he should have done, if he had known the Castle had been so inhabited; though he should now be happy to make up for his deficiency, by paying double attention.

“ The countenance of Mr. Davis was of a pleasing and sensible cast: there was something in his manner, that indicated feeling, and carried comfort to the heart; a speaking kind of intelligence, that insensibly demanded confidence; and a mixture of candour, honesty, and openness, that forbade a doubt of the testimony of his features. We got insensibly into chat, and two hours elapsed, ere I thought half an hour gone. Mr. Davis then departed, promising to see me again very shortly.

“ I was no sooner alone, than I revolved in my mind the occurrences of the morning, and felt thrilled with horror at the
chance

chance there was, had we been discovered by the smugglers, that we should never again have been permitted to return to the castle. Decided, however, to continue my search, I yet determined to do it with caution; and to take the old woman, if she were well enough, to accompany me for my companion. Under pretence, therefore, of visiting the kitchen, I was introduced to her. To my astonishment she understood me, and could reply to my questions, though but indifferently. I mentioned my design; she readily agreed to conduct me, and was to be with me by ten the next morning.

“ So much had the idea of the danger, to which we had been exposed, taken possession of my mind, that I could not close my eyes; and the idea of thieves, spectres, and

and other idle visions of the brain, so disordered me, that I shook with terrour.

“ Rising with the first dawn of light, and going into the child’s room, I opened the shutter, and perceived something moving in the court ; I followed it with my eyes, till it went into a stable, and brought out two horses. At first I thought it was my host, but as I looked attentively, I observed the step was too firm, and the figure too erect, for a person of his age. Every thing now corroborated my suspicions ; and though I inwardly trembled at the thought of being discovered by them, yet I felt something more, when I not only considered them as disagreeable and dangerous neighbours, but reflected on the very great risk there was of having the peace and quiet we enjoyed broken by a visit from those, who are constantly employed to detect these
unlawful

unlawful dealers. Determined, if possible, to obtain some intelligence respecting them, and the exact situation of the place, I resolved to apply to Mr. Davis for the information I sought. I had been fearful of asking any questions of the girl that waited on me; and even now, when I found the old woman understood me, I did not like to appear inquisitive to her, or to betray my ignorance of the place in which I resided, lest it might impress on her mind an unfavourable opinion of me, and raise in turn a curiosity I should not choose to satisfy. The same reason had also deterred me from making the request of Mr. Davis, for whose next visit I looked with anxiety.

“My hostess was punctual to her appointment, and we set out together, to make the circuit of the house. I presently
saw

few chambers, that would answer my purpose, and which, with a little attention, might be made not only habitable, but comfortable. I could not help observing, that my conductress avoided the western tower, but guided me through long ranges of antique chambers, the walls and furniture of which at once bore testimony of their former grandeur and present decay. With her I traversed the chapel, in which I did not stay long enough to examine it thoroughly, as it struck both cold and damp; but, little time as I afforded it, I could not help observing two very recent monuments of parian marble, which were raised to the memory of a lady Trevor and her daughter.

“ I was about to ask my conductress who they were, when she prevented me, by saying, that, if I pleased, some future day she would

would show me a handsome suite of rooms, which were particularly appropriated to the use of her late lady. Here I could not resist asking who that was, as I thought it a desirable opportunity, to obtain the intelligence I wanted. She replied, lady Trevor: adding, that this castle was formerly the seat of sir Llewellyn Trevor, but he dying childless, it had descended to another baronet of the family; 'a lord, madam,' said she, 'but though it has been in his possession upwards of twenty years, he has never been to see it: my husband acts as his steward, and collects the rents; and he desired, that we would reside in it. But, madam, I see you are fatigued; any day that you feel an inclination, to see the other part of the castle, I will, with pleasure, attend you.' I thanked her, and we separated.

“Curious

“Curious as I was, to see the apartments she mentioned, I was for some time too ill, to attempt the undertaking, and confined myself to my apartment, amusing myself with my little girl, who now ran alone, and began to speak.

“In the course of a week I was again able to accompany Mrs. Price, and by her was shown into a kind of anti-room, that led to a handsome gallery, round which the portraits of the Llewellyns and their ancestors for some centuries back were hung. I found my conductress an able genealogist; her recollection, if I might judge, was tolerably clear, and she ran down from the first to the last of the race, with as much facility and precision, as the most able herald could have done.

“She stopped, however, at the portrait of a charming girl, apparently about sixteen

teen years of age. 'This dear young lady, madam,' said she, 'was the only child of the late sir Llewellyn and his lady; and if you please I will recount her story to you, which has in it something very remarkable.' On telling her, that I should be glad to hear it, and would thank her for the communication, she thus began.

'This young lady was, as I have said, the daughter of sir Llewellyn and lady Trevor. They gave her the best education it was possible to procure. They had a governess for her, who taught her to play on the spinnet, take off flowers and faces, and talk french. But this good lady dying before miss Elfrida was grown up, she was sent to London for a few years.

'When she returned she was exactly sixteen, just at the time this picture was drawn.

Every

Every body perceived a great change in her: from being one of the most lively, cheerful ladies in the world, she became dull: she had no spirits, and would walk for hours on the battlements and weep. Sir Llewellyn and my lady thought her melancholy was owing to the very retired life she led, and to amuse her made large parties, and were continually having company from London. The house was like a fair, but all would not do. Her father and mother tried every means possible, to learn from her the cause of her melancholy; but nothing would do. She seemed determined not to reveal the secret that oppressed her; though when alone she was almost always in tears, yet before her parents she endeavoured to assume a cheerfulness she did not feel.

‘ I was

‘ I was then young, and used to be employed by her in needle-work, of which she was very fond, and frequently came herself and taught me what to do. To her I am obliged for the little knowledge I possess in english, as she took great pleasure in instructing me, but I have now from disuse almost forgotten it. As I was then young and cheerful, I was frequently singing when she came in: how often did she wish, that she was as happy as I was, and could laugh and sing with a heart as much at ease !

‘ For above a twelvemonth she went on in this manner. During the time she received offers of marriage from several of the neighbouring gentlemen, but she refused them all, saying, she had no desire to marry, she could never be happier than under the protection of her parents, and she

she wished it might be her fate never to quit them. Ever since she returned to Wales she had been accustomed to receive letters from London ; but sir Llewellyn and his lady, judging they might be from some of her schoolfellows, never sought to know their contents. For the last four months of her life these letters had been more frequent, and it was plain to be seen, that she was more miserable upon the receipt of them. Nevertheless, she assumed a composure before her parents, for which in private she suffered : she has frequently sung and played to them, while the tears, unobserved by them, have run down her cheeks ; and when my lady has desired her not to fatigue herself, she used to reply, that it was no fatigue to perform her duty, and comply with her own inclinations, which

which were to oblige her dear father and mother,

‘ In short, madam, she was the most attentive and dutiful child, it was possible to be.—But to come to the end of my story, she went one evening, as was usual with her, to walk on the battlement, from which she never returned. Alas! madam, her melancholy had so far gotten the better of her, that she flung herself over it; at least we supposed so; but her body was never found, though my poor master and mistress tried every means possible, to discover what had become of her. You can have no idea, what a dreadful house we had: nothing was heard but lamentations: not a soul but was in tears. My poor lady was never seen to smile again: she survived her child but six months, and it was plain
she

she died of grief. Sir Llewellyn had the misfortune to outlive them six years, during which time he never quitted the castle. All his delight was to walk in the chapel, to those tombs you so much admired: whole hours, nay days, would he remain there, and at last, madam, was found dead by them. He saw no one but Mr. Davis, the father of the gentleman that came to you last week: to him he delivered a paper found in miss Elfrida's chamber after her death.' Here Mrs. Price ended her narrative, which I with great difficulty understood, as her english was very imperfect.

" Upon revolving the fate of the hapless Elfrida in my mind, there appeared to be a great mystery in it. That she could take so rash a step seemed more than melancholy, it seemed the result of settled despair:

yet, when I weighed every thing, I doubted whether she had chosen a watery grave. That her body should not have been found seemed unaccountable, as the place from which it disappeared was for a considerable distance left dry by the tide.—‘What could tempt so young, so good a girl,’ said I mentally, ‘to such an act of wickedness? she had no breach of duty to wound her conscience: her actions were all correspondent with the most implicit obedience.’

“Thanking my conductress for her information, I continued my tour through the apartments. The next I visited had been a drawing-room, the furniture of which, though antique, was rich, and even in the present day not inelegant. The seats and backs of the chairs were the work of lady Trevor and Elfrida. Adjoining to
this

this was the music-room, where hung the remains of a lute, which had fallen to pieces from the damp. A spinnet was also here, the keys of which I attempted to move, but could make no impression on them. A book was open upon the stand, and in a drawer underneath lay many others. A secret inclination for the removal of this piece of furniture now possessed me; and I thought, could I but have it placed in my apartment, I should with a little trouble be able to derive from it some amusement, to soothe the melancholy of my situation.

“ On mentioning my desire to Mrs. Price, she immediately consented, and said, that, if I thought I could make any use of it, her husband, who the next day was going to Caermarthen, should bring me strings for it. I thanked her for her attention, and in the evening saw it placed in

my parlour. Upon my taking notice of the neglected state in which every thing in this apartment particularly appeared, she informed me, that, after Elfrida's death, neither sir Llewellyn nor lady Trevor would permit any one to enter or touch a thing in it; and from that hour she believed it had not even been dusted. 'Indeed, madam,' continued the poor woman, 'to say truth, I have never had any good will to this place since; for I could almost fancy I see my dear young lady here now. Often and often have I seen her sit at this music, and play and sing so charmingly; and now, when I think of her dreadful end, I feel a horror at entering any of the chambers, that were particularly her's.'

"Nothing certainly could look more forlorn, than this suite of rooms. The spiders, I believe, had held undisturbed possession

session of them for twenty years, and in this time they had multiplied so abundantly, that the walls might be truly said to be hung with cobwebs. We passed through several others, till we came to the library. This contained many books, which, though worm-eaten, and almost rotten from the damp, bore testimony of the taste of their former possessor. They were chiefly religious; though I found some historical, and some poetical. I could not now be at a loss for amusement, as this room afforded abundance; and I took several books from it, to peruse at my leisure.

“The library was the only room, that had windows sufficiently low to look out of without standing up; and I took the opportunity it afforded, of completely gratifying my curiosity, as to the situation of the castle. It commanded a noble and

extensive view of the sea, and the isle of Anglesea. To the west, from the top of the turret by the chapel, in the eastern tower, Mrs. Price told me, on a clear day the isle of Man was perfectly visible to the naked eye. On the south appeared a long range of hills falling in rude confusion upon each other, while the lofty Snowdon raised it's majestic head above the rest. It's snowy top and rocky surface were easily distinguished, while the few goats, that gleaned their scanty subsistence from it's flinty sides, were invisible to the eye. It was now the middle of march, and still nature preserved her wintery garb. The brownness of the pine, the mountain heather, and russet fir, gave a cold gloominess to the view, that was quite in unison with my feelings. A thousand reflexions crouded upon me, as I surveyed the country around.

My

My desolate, my unprotected state rose fresh in my mind; and, comparing myself to one of the few shrubs the sides of the hills afforded, and on which the goats were browsing, ‘Ah!’ said I aloud, ‘am I not, like you, food for the spoiler? Who is there here, to shelter me from harm? To whom can I flee for safety? But I have deserved it all: it is but a just recompense for my conduct, a reward of my disobedience.’

“Mrs. Price, evidently astonished, turned towards me, as if to understand what I was saying: but I saw she did not clearly comprehend what I had so unguardedly uttered; and I strove to recal my scattered thoughts by asking her, whether there were no way to this room but through those we had passed.

“O yes, madam,” she replied, “but it is through poor miss Elfrida’s room; and that,”

that,' added she, with a look of affright, ' is really haunted.'

" Telling her I had no fear of ghosts, I begged her to show it me. This she was unwilling to do; till, encouraged by my example, and overcome by my urgency, she consented. At the entrance, however, she hung back, as if in doubt, whether she should proceed or not. To relieve her terror, and satisfy myself, I went first, and found, that this room also had low windows, which overlooked the sea. I was surprized at it's situation, but Mrs. Price told me it belonged to the western tower, and had a stair-case and passage, which led to the battlements. She then opened the door of the passage, and thence proceeded to another, which discovered the stairs I so well knew.

" Miss Elfrida did not always sleep here, madam,' she said: ' for the last twelve-month

month only of her life she made this room her choice. She used to feel a pleasure in hearing the waves beat against the shore, and in this room she could indulge her melancholy.' Just at this instant we heard some one tread heavily over our heads, and the distant sound of voices. 'Did I not say,' exclaimed my conductress, 'that this place was haunted? Dear madam, do let us go back. Hark! it is as if some body were coming down stairs. Let us go upon the battlement.'

"Not for worlds," I returned. 'No, no, Mrs. Price; there is no ghost to frighten you; the living here are ten times more to be feared than the dead. But we will return the way we came.'

"She opened the door, however, that led to the battlement. I feared we should be seen; and I thought, if we once dis-

turbed these visitors, we should soon experience what unpleasant neighbours we had. I was more convinced of the illicit trade these people carried on, by observing a vessel at some distance, and a boat with several people in it approaching the shore. I concluded, that they were landing their cargoes; which, on this retired part of the coast, they could do at any time of day without fear of molestation, unless informed against.

“ Happily we got back unperceived by any one, and I returned to my apartment. Two days afterwards I was taken ill, and grew so much worse, that I dispatched my landlord for Mr. Davis, who immediately attended my summons. From him I learned, that the name of the castle was Tregwyllynd. It had formerly been built and inhabited by a baron of the name; but, in
4 consequence

consequence of his marriage with the Trevors, descended into that family, in the possession of which it had remained upwards of three centuries; till sir Llewellyn, having lost his only child, it had descended in right of his sister to the marquis of Monceath.

“The marquis of Monceath!” said I faintly; “then it is all explained. My being secluded from the world and my friends needs no farther elucidation. I now know and see to whom I am indebted. For worlds would I not stay in this place.”

“Mr. Davis was evidently struck by my words, as was natural. To prevent idle curiosity or suspicion, I gave him my history in as few words as possible, suppressing only the name of my father. I did not attempt to excuse, or extenuate my conduct; indeed it would not admit of palliation. My little

narrative I concluded, by begging him to procure me proper accommodations, elsewhere.

“ To my story he lent a patient hearing, but in my desire of removal he could by no means acquiesce. He said, although it was plain, that revenge had induced the marquis to advise my husband to seclude me from the world, yet, as a wife, I ought still to remain in the place, which my husband had chosen for me. Besides, at this time, a removal would be improper for myself; and he knew not of any place, to which I could go, and be as eligibly situate in point of convenience as here. His house, he continued, and every one in it, should be at my service; but captain Manley would naturally make his first inquiries there. And although I was seemingly excluded from society, yet the bustle my husband would naturally

turally make upon finding I had quitted Tregwyllynd would give an unfavourable opinion of me to the world, and particularly prejudice my father against me. While I complied with my husband's commands, I should have nothing with which to reproach myself; but, if I threw myself out of his protection, though my conduct might, and he was sure would, be as innocent as possible, yet that very step would give rise to calumny, and let loose the tongue of slander against me. At any rate he would advise me not to think of quitting the castle till after my lying-in: something by that time might occur, either to reconcile me to my situation, or totally remove me from it.

“ Upon this topic we sustained a long argument; but in the end I was so far convinced

vinced by the worthy man's reasons, that I consented to remain where I was.

“How strangely do things come about! Who would have thought, that Monceath should so immediately have taken such means of revenge? Or what could be his motives for prompting my husband to bury me in this solitude? What a triumph to him, I thought, must this be; to feel, that I was lamenting my exile from society through his instigation, and in his castle. Yet, why should he thus pursue me with his revenge? I ought not to have acted otherwise than I did: I should only have entailed on myself misery and infamy, and been still more contemptible than my conduct has made me.

“So much was I engrossed by this discovery, that I forgot to mention poor Elfrida's

frida's story, or to learn from Mr. Davis the particulars of it.

“ In a few days afterwards I was safely delivered of my dear boy. No words can express the rapture of my heart, when I was told I had a son. As I folded the dear baby to my breast, ‘ welcome, dear messenger of peace and pardon !’ I said, ‘ now shall I be reconciled to my father. You, blessed infant, will be my intercessor ; you will plead and obtain your mother’s pardon !’

“ With these fallacious hopes I cheered my spirits, and fancied in idea all the pleasures and comforts arising from family union. Captain Manley came to Tregwyllynd. He was much pleased with his son. Like me he regarded him as the herald of pardon, and anticipated through his means a thousand agreeable hopes. Yet
through

through all his joy there was visibly something that hung on his mind. He was often absent, thoughtful, and, if spoken to, morose. He several times rebuked Emma with a severity, that drew tears from my eyes ; and the slightest word, or even look, was sufficient to throw his spirits into disorder. I endeavoured all in my power to learn from him the cause of his concern. For a long time he eluded all my questions ; at length he confessed, that he was deeply in debt, and for the last month had had such a run of ill-luck, that he had invariably lost every night. This, with the pressing demands of his creditors, was the cause of his dejection ; and he plainly told me, that he had no means of satisfying them.

“ Thus disagreeably passed several days, when a letter from his attorney, informing

ing him of a legacy left me by a distant relation, hastened his return to London, and relieved my mind. I found the legacy amounted to two thousand pounds ; and this, I hoped, would be sufficient to clear all his incumbrances. As this event had put my husband into good humour, I ventured to solicit a removal ; but in this I was disappointed ; he was resolved I should still remain at Tregwyllynd, though he gave me hopes my stay would not be long.

“ I parted, therefore, more cheerfully from him ; and, as he took the maid up to town with him, the care and nursing of my boy devolved almost entirely on myself ; for Winifred was obliged to do every part of the household business, both for me and her grandmother ; of course she had but
little

little time to bestow on nursing; which, though a labour I was unused to, I seldom found an unpleasant task; and, as it served to call my mind from it's internal disquiet, it was of service to me.

“ My Emma too became a pretty companion; she could lisp both welch and english, and in her lively and innocent prattle I found relief from many melancholy hours. I now too had learned to draw consolation from the resources of religion; misfortune had taught me resignation to the divine will; by abstracting my thoughts from this world, I had learned to look forward with hope to permanent happiness in a future state. The books, too, which from time to time I took from the library, though worm-eaten, rotten, and oftentimes scarcely legible, were sources of amusement and instruction.

instruction. In short, though totally secluded from society, I was far from being unhappy.

“ Solitude, by affording time for reflection, had opened to my view sources of consolation, to which I had hitherto been a stranger. It had taught me to look with contempt upon the frivolous pursuits, in which I had been engaged, and to reflect with no small degree of self-condemnation upon those hours I had so wantonly abused, and which might have been far more nobly employed. I now began to think as a mother, and looked forward with anxious solicitude to that time, when I should be called to fulfil the duty of a good one, by being myself preceptress to my children. Already had I in idea chalked out the plan I should pursue, and allotted the
occupation

occupation of the day to the hours of it.

“ Summer now with lavish hand had scattered a thousand beauties over the face of creation. The views about Tregwyllynd were highly romantic and luxuriantly beautiful. Here nature still preserved her original lustre ; where art had not deformed the scene, every prospect was charming, because wild and natural. The views about the castle wore quite a different aspect, and the smooth and wide expanse of waters, that washed it's base, added a picturesque beauty to the already delightful landscape. My children and myself, now accustomed to exercise, drew health and pleasure from it ; every walk I took, every scene that presented itself to my view, made me more and more enjoy the beauties of nature,
beauties

beauties to which I had hitherto been insensible.

“ Months thus rolled away. I had scarcely even heard from captain Manley ; and except Mr. Davis, who now and then called on me, I held no communication with the world, or ever saw a creature beside those belonging to the house. It was in one of the visits, that Mr. Davis paid me, I learned the sequel, or rather developement of Elfrida's story.

“ His father, he said, had been left executor to the late baronet ; and, among other papers, found the letter she had left, when she disappeared.

“ By that he was informed, that she had, when at school, been introduced by one of the friends of the young ladies to a foreigner of distinction, with whom she had

had contracted an acquaintance. He sought and found frequent occasion to meet her; at length a mutual attachment took place; and he obtained, from her, a written promise to be his, when she had attained the age of eighteen. She had scarcely made this promise, before she was summoned home; whither she had no sooner returned, than the idea of having acted clandestinely, and the consciousness of having abused the indulgence of such tender parents, preyed upon her mind, and tore it with anguish she could neither control nor conceal. Unable to inform them of the folly, of which she had been guilty, or resist the pressing intreaties of the man, to whom she had promised herself, she had taken a step, which would for ever preclude the possibility of comfort, either in this or

a future life. She besought her father to forgive her, recommended herself in the most heart-piercing manner to the tenderness of her mother, and prayed the Almighty to pardon her.

“ Poor, hapless girl !” said I, “ what must have been thy feelings to prompt thee to the commission of an act like that of suicide.”

“ Suicide !” said Mr. Davis, in evident surprise, “ do you really think Elfrida committed so rash an action ?”

“ Certainly. Does not Mrs. Price know she did ?”

“ By no means,” he returned, “ no proof was yet produced of her having done so. Her letter is written ambiguously, so much so, that at first it deceived every one. But there never was any stronger reason, to suppose

pose that she had met with a premature death; had she, her body must have been found; every place, every corner, even the cavern beneath the castle were searched. There was no trace, no vestige of the body, nor could all the inquiries her parents made ever obtain the least intelligence of her. I firmly believe, that she absconded with her lover: but who he was, or what, was always kept secret.'

"Then why did sir Llewellyn cause that monument, to be erected to her memory?"

"Because he considered her as dead to him, and lamented her rather as what she had been, than what she was. Believe me, my dear madam, Elfrida found not a watery grave, at least near Tregwyllynd. We discoursed a long while on this subject; but as I could neither be convinced by Mr.

Davis's

Davis's reasons, nor would he subscribe to mine, we at length dropped it.

“ My boy had now attained his sixth month; the evenings were getting long and cold. I began to feel my solitude, and dreaded the approach of winter.

“ I was sitting reading one evening, after the children were in bed, when, to my astonishment, I heard a carriage drive into the court yard: a sound so unusual could not fail to awaken my attention. I was startled by it, but ere I had time to collect myself, the door of the parlour opened, and my husband and the marquis of Monceath stood before me. At sight of him I was as one petrified, my emotion then became so great I could with difficulty pay the proper compliments.

“ I retraced in my mind all the former circumstances of our acquaintance; the

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surprise and agitation, under which I laboured, could not be disguised: as the past was recalled to my recollection, my feelings could not be suppressed; and, therefore, under pretence of visiting my children, I quitted the room, and in private gave vent to my tears.

“ At breakfast the next morning the marquis was all civility and attention; he admired my children, nursed and played with them alternately, and begged to be allowed to stand godfather to my boy, who had not yet been christened. I mentioned having named my father and lord Delby as his godfathers. Captain Manley said, the marquis had made the journey purposely to stand to the child, and so it should be. I looked at my husband while he said this, and in his countenance read a something, that gave an inexpressible pang to my
5 heart;

heart; it was an expression there is no defining.

“ For a long while the marquis was the most submissive and unassuming character, to which it was possible to pretend. To me he was all attention; to my children kindness itself: but, as I despised the man, I disregarded his attentions: indeed I was fearful of giving the least encouragement to them, as I too much doubted their tendency. Frequently would he, when we were alone, breathe out a wish, that he had been fortunate enough to have been my choice; then heave a sigh, and try to suppress others as they rose: take my children in his arms, and say how happy captain Manley ought to be in the possession of such blessings. He would invent a thousand excuses to detain me in the room, and continually hinting how ungrateful my

husband

husband was to his own happiness, and negligent of mine, that could indulge in the company of the unprincipled, and leave such a home, and such a wife. To all these insinuations I turned a deaf ear. He then sought to alarm my jealousy by hinting at his having formed other attachments; and in the most pathetic terms lamented the situation of a woman, who, after having forfeited every thing for a man, found herself neglected by him, for the most contemptible of the sex; and concluded by saying, that in his opinion any woman was justified in pursuing the same course.

“ The inutility of argument with a man of the marquis’s description I had before experienced: I affected, therefore, to receive his intelligence with indifference, not to show him that his discourse made the smallest impression on me. At length, finding

finding that I was insensible to every art of this kind, and tired with my wilful apathy, he again ventured in strong and energetic language, to declare the violence of this passion; besought me, in the most abject manner, to hear him with patience, and consent to his wishes; told me, by so doing, I should save my husband from a prison; as he was largely in his debt, and that would be the means of cancelling it; and added, for his sake I ought not to be insensible, but accept his proposals, if not, he should revenge himself on him.

“ Language is inadequate to describe what I felt at this discourse. I believe there is scarcely a sentiment, of which the human breast is capable, expressive of contempt and indignation, but what rose in mine at this juncture; in vain I tried to calm them, or attempt to speak; anger had deprived me

of the power of utterance. For a time every essay I made to express myself by words was ineffectual ; but if looks, if features ever spoke, mine must ; and if they did, they must indeed have spoken emphatically. At length I found utterance.

“ You have not deceived me, sir,” said I, “ your present conduct has no way altered the opinion I have long since formed of you : how dare you again insult me with a proposal so injurious to my honour ? What part of my conduct has warranted an address of this nature ? How dare you, sir, treat, with such unexampled insolence, a woman every way your superiour ? No, sir, poverty, even beggary, would be preferable to the most splendid allurements you could offer. Oh God, God ! said I, bursting into an agony of tears, to what a level am I reduced, that this wretch should
again

again wound my ears with his insolence ! But I deserve it all ; why did not I leave this place, the moment I knew to whom it belonged ? by my stay I have sanctioned this unprincipled behaviour : I will no longer remain in his power ; I will fly even to the ends of the earth, though I knew death were the immediate consequence, rather than'—

“ Stop, madam,’ he returned, forcibly detaining me, and assuming an appearance of humiliated sorrow, ‘ forgive me, forgive this effusion of my unhappy passion ; grant me but your pardon, and never again will I repeat a conversation of the kind ; but leave you this day, and quit your sight for ever.’

“ No, sir,’ I replied, ‘ this house is yours ; it is for me to quit it : wherever you are, it will be improper for me to remain ; much more so in a house

in which you are master : I will go, therefore, and that immediately.'

" Be not rash in your determination, my dear madam,' said this artful man; 'whither would you go? you have no place ready to receive you, none to which you can immediately go : if you return to London, or go to Bath, in neither of those places dare Manley show his face, without running into the very mouth of danger. Think, madam, if by your hastiness you involved him in distress, or placed him in a prison, how you would condemn yourself. It was that he might escape these dangers I accompanied him to Tregwyllynd; and, little as you may think of me, I am too much his friend, to precipitate him into confinement.

" Though miserable, and almost devoid
of

of hope at this intelligence, and unknowing what course to pursue, or which way to turn, I was yet inwardly resolved to get out of this man's power: but fearful, if I told captain Manley, of the consequences that might ensue, I was obliged to seem convinced by his arguments, and to accept of his promised amendment. I therefore gave a reluctant promise, to remain where I was, but inwardly determined not to do so longer, than till I had resolved upon some plan to release me from his power.

“ From the first moment of my being alone with captain Manley, after his return, I had urged the necessity of leaving the castle, and besought him to seek out some other residence for me, but all I had hitherto said on the subject had been ineffectual. I again mentioned it, and softening the matter as much as possible, hinted that

the late behaviour of the marquis had very much displeased me; that his address was too particular for me to suffer, and that while I continued here, it seemed a tacit encouragement to him. To my inexpressible surprise, captain Manley, though heretofore jealous almost to an extreme, laughed at the reasons I adduced: politely telling me, that I saw common civility through a false medium, and that, blinded by vanity, I fancied every man that saw me was in love with me; that he should not, to oblige the whims and caprice of a silly woman, quarrel with his best friend; and concluded with hinting, that civility in return would best become me. I was so much hurt at the manner in which he spoke, and the indifference and insensibility with which he received my intelligence, that I burst
into

into tears, which had no other effect than drawing upon myself his anger and ridicule.

“ Convinced, therefore, that I had no other dependence but my own prudence, on which I could rely, I determined to be upon my guard, and carefully avoid giving the marquis an opportunity of being alone with me, or even particularly addressing me. I therefore, in pursuance of my plan, shunned his company, and even avoided joining in conversation with him, never speaking but in answer to questions, which were expressly put to me.

“ He saw and felt my behaviour, and in the course of a few days so altered his, that it seemed as if he were really anxious, to make me satisfied with him, and remove my doubts.

“ Though I was certainly pleased at this change, I yet still feared the motives that dictated it; but as he was now respectful in his conduct, I was under the necessity of appearing more at ease with him.

“ He continued thus for more than two months, in which time he so far gained upon my good opinion, as to create something like respect for him. He appeared so interested in our affairs, spoke with such plainness upon the distressful consequences attending an attachment to the gaming table, seemed so resolved to alter his own conduct, and took such unwearied pains to make my husband sensible of the impropriety of his, that he insensibly obtained my good opinion and confidence.

“ The alteration in my husband’s behaviour was evident to every one; he treated me with harshness and unkindness,

at

at times he suffered his passions so far to gain the ascendancy of his reason, as to make him almost frantic, and upon the slightest provocation he would load me with the lowest abuse.

“ The marquis would then interfere, and in the gentlest and most soothing manner endeavour to soften him, and turn his thoughts to another channel; at other times he would laugh him out of his passions, and ridicule him for giving way to them.

“ After this way we lived, till, Christmas approaching, the marquis thought of returning to London. The evening previous to his departure we were alarmed by an unusual noise in the court-yard, and before we had time to conjecture from what it might arise, two tall ill-looking men entered our apartment. My husband turned
pale

pale as death ; in a moment we conjectured what it was. Bailiffs, a prison, and all the attending horrors now rushed upon my senses. Two more came in ; I sunk fainting into a chair ; they immediately seized both the marquis and my husband by the collar. In vain I besought, implored them to release them : I clung about Manley for preservation, but was at length rudely forced, by others that entered, into a seat. For a moment all was silent, none of us could comprehend to what this scene alluded, for the idea of bailiffs, though at first it had alarmed us, now subsided upon the entrance of more than two of the men.

“ The noise that now took place prevented any particular voice being heard, for both my husband and the marquis, enraged to find themselves thus detained, made the most violent struggles for their liberty, which
having

having regained, they dealt their blows about them pretty smartly. In a moment the men drew their cutlasses, numbers of soldiers rushed in, and nothing could be distinctly understood. A blow, aimed at the head of my husband, drew from me a loud scream. I believe I had before been unobserved, from the numbers that now filled the apartment, till one, apparently superior to the rest, advanced to me, and would have removed me from the room. The marquis seeing this, and ignorant of the man's intentions, darted forward, and with a most surprising quickness and strength beat him to the ground. The scuffle that ensued beggars all description; and it was not till after some time we understood, that these were officers of the revenue come to seize the smugglers, that inhabited the castle. The mystery was now unravelled, and

and the marquis, declaring who he was, asked them whether they supposed a man of his quality knew or encouraged a commerce so contemptible. The officers showed him the information they had received; begged his and Mr. Manley's pardon, for the treatment they had given them, and requested leave to search the castle, as they were well assured vast quantities of contraband goods were hidden in it.

“ They obtained permission; not a place however trifling escaped their observation, but till they came to the western tower and its apartments, nothing could be found to authorize the step they had taken. In those rooms, however, they were amply gratified: they found numberless articles, though the smugglers themselves had escaped.

“ Not even the door, which I so unwarily found out, which led to the caverns,

was

was passed unobserved; about twenty of them descended. The spoil they there found was immense, and several of the smugglers were taken. My fears for my husband were, it is true, removed, but the castle had become more disagreeable to me, as I did not doubt but the remainder of the party, knowing that it was inhabited, would directly conclude we were the informers, and consequently seek to revenge upon us the loss they had sustained.

“ This furnished me with fresh arguments for our removal, but all was ineffectual. Manley was determined to remain at Tregwyllynd, and I was obliged to be content.

“ In the course of the week, the marquis set off for London. I was now so used to his company, and his manners of late had been so extremely correct and proper,
that

that I regretted his loss, especially as captain Manley's temper grew so bad, and his attachment to the bottle so evident, that I had every thing to fear from him. His friend alone knew how to manage him; and, while he remained with us, was a check upon his temper.

“ We had now been left to ourselves for some days, when, accidentally going into the chamber in which the marquis had slept, I perceived his port folio; wondering that it should be forgotten, I was considering how it would be best to forward it to him, when, taking it up, it slipped out of my hands, and in the fall several writings escaped it. Among these was a letter just begun, in returning which to its place the name of my husband struck me, and my eye involuntarily ran over the contents. They were as follows:—

“ I can

“ I can fool it no longer, Ned. It is a more difficult part to act the hypocrite than I imagined : the more I see, the more I know of this charming woman, the more am I resolved to possess her ; I must strike a bold stroke to do so. Manley is already too much in my power, to dare resist it ; besides, I can at any time secure him.

“ Meet me at the Bell at Gloucester, by Friday next ; we will there concert proper means of—”

“ Here this infamous scrawl broke off ; I doubted not for a moment, who was to be the object of his schemes. My heart beat with violence, and fear at length so far gained the ascendancy, that I felt as if fearful of stirring from the place where I was, lest something dreadful and unexpected might happen, before I reached the sitting room. How to act in this emergency I knew

knew not; to whom to apply I could not tell: if to my husband, I must convince him what ground I had for my fears, by showing the letter; and were I to do so, nothing short of murder would be the consequence. I had no alternative; I hastened to captain Manley, and, in the most earnest manner again besought him, to consent to our immediate removal, alleging as an excuse, that the air was too keen for my boy; adding likewise, we were at such a distance from my father, that even were he disposed to be reconciled to us, we could not hear of his wishes to be so. As he was now perfectly sober, I tried every means, and used every argument in my power, to make him comply. He seemed convinced by my reasons, and even disposed to grant my request; but, recollecting himself, said, he had promised the
marquis

marquis not to quit the castle till he returned, which would be in a few weeks.

“Then all is over,” said I, “and I am betrayed and lost.” He turned upon this exclamation, saying, “who has betrayed you, or why will you be lost, if you stay here?”

“Do not ask me,” I returned; “only let us leave this place.”

“You have some particular reason for this request, madam, I insist upon knowing it; what is it that makes you thus urgent?”

“I dare not tell you,” I replied: “but, inform me, quickly, are you not deeply in debt to the marquis?”

“He started, ‘if I am, will you, madam, discharge the obligation?’

“Most willingly will I; but upon condition, that you leave this place immediately,

ately, and close all connexion with the marquis.'

"He paused—'will you be firm in what you now say, or are you trifling with me?'

"I am not, as God hears me, captain Manley, I am not trifling with you; I will pledge my word not to retract from what I have said, if you will but be candid in regard to your situation with Monceath, and remove me hence.'

"Again he was silent for a few moments; then, leading me into the parlour, conducted me to a seat, placed himself by me, and addressed me, as near as I can recollect, to the following effect:—

"I do not ask you your motives for wishing to quit this castle; I know them but too well; they are to your honour; would to God mine for your stay were to mine! I must, however, unfold to you particulars,

particulars, with which you are unacquainted, and which will require all your fortitude to hear with patience, and all your gentleness to forgive. For this purpose I must return to the first period of our acquaintance. The fortune, which, as an only child and sole heiress to the earl of Delmore, you were expected to possess, was the motive that first prompted my addresses to you. The estate, which by inheritance became mine, was all dissipated; I had nothing to subsist on but my pay. Attached to the gaming-table, I soon found it inadequate to my expenses; when the war breaking out, I was ordered into Germany. Still I was necessitous: gaming, perhaps, has never more votaries than in a camp: ill fortune pursued me, and I returned to England poorer than I quitted it. I mortgaged my pay, and had no resource left

left but that of mending my fortune by marriage. Being the only child of so rich a man as your father is generally esteemed, I selected you as the object of my attention; and I entertained no doubt of future pardon with the earl, when I considered, that you were his only hope and darling.

“ After we were married, to impress on his mind the idea of my reformation, and to induce him to take us into favour, I purposely left London, and for a while all my libertine acquaintance: but when I found he was inexorable, and resisted every solicitation, I no longer thought it necessary to wear a mask, but hastened to town, and again appeared at Brookes’s, whence I for some months derived my support; and as I pretty well knew how to insure success, there was no fear of my resources failing. But, being one evening over-

matched

matched by a set that were strangers to me, I was pigeoned out of four hundred pounds. Unluckily I had it not about me; but the marquis of Monceath, who was a looker on, offered me the money, saying, that he should take no security but my word. This conduct certainly was generous in a man, with whom at the time I had so very slight an acquaintance; however, chance so far favoured me, that I won my money back the same evening.

“ From this time Monceath and I grew very intimate: he was continually with me, and you recollect how much he was of our parties. I was surprized at his sudden absences from them, and asked him the reason. He declined giving it; but insinuated doubts of your conduct, and frequently pointed you out to my observation, so as to alarm my jealousy. This he effectually

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did. On the night of the masquerade I was watching you, saw you fainting in sir Wilfrid Emans's arms, and saw him carry you out. It was with difficulty I could master myself, so as to keep my disguise; and nothing but the interference of the marquis, who had but just recognised me, prevented my discovering myself. He had frequently said, that, were you his wife, he would remove you from society. I had before caught this hint, and told him, if I knew any proper place, at a distance from the metropolis, I would convey you to it. He then offered me this castle, which he sent to have ready against any time I thought proper to bring you hither. Upon the night of the masquerade I resolved to avail myself of his offer, and told him so. He immediately dispatched an express to his bailiff, who resides here, and through his means

means we found the place ready to receive us.

“ I had no sooner returned to London, than I hastened again to Brookes’s, where such a run of success attended me, that, had I been a prudent man, might have been sufficient to have satisfied my utmost wants. But, grown bold by my good fortune, I rashly ventured again, and played double stakes. The fickle goddess deserted me: I lost all, and more than I was in possession of. Harassed by those to whom I was indebted, I resolved to prevail on you to dispose of your annuity, the marquis constantly urging me to do so; and, as he was my chief creditor, I considered he might, in some degree, be in want of money. To oblige him, and indeed to deliver myself from incessant dunning, I came down to Tregwyllynd. I will not say to what lengths

the firmness of your denial might have tempted me, had not the legacy left by Mrs. Egmont prevented me, by again furnishing me with the means of reappearing in London. Again I was at the gaming-table ; again all was lost. For six months I scarcely went into bed sober ; for, heated and inflamed at faro, maddened by losses I felt it impossible to retrieve, several times had I formed the desperate resolution of putting an end to myself and my miseries together. I never rose but to be tormented for money I could not pay ; or laid down but to be tortured by reflexions, which the bottle by day chased from my recollection.

“ Miserable is the life of a gamester ; the slave chained to the oar purchases existence at far less cost, and enjoys his hard-earned morsel with more true felicity. Drinking deprived me of all command of myself,

myself, or temper, to regain by circumspection what I had lost. I was easily duped, and I believe frequently pigeoned. I knew not which way to take: I had no money to pursue my advantages, even had I gained; and if I left off, I had no other resource, to which I could fly.

“The marquis, to whom I had paid all my debts, again offered his assistance, which I thankfully received. I am now considerably in his debt; and shall I own to you, that he accompanied me here to force you to give up your annuity? for compulsion was to have been used, did you not voluntarily agree to do so; but within this month he has declined the idea of compelling you, and has urged the necessity of gentle treatment and persuasion.

“Once he hinted, that it was in my power to cancel all obligations betwixt us.

He owned his affection was as strong as ever for you, and even laid me a wager, that he could move your heart in his favour. I was not villain enough to suffer him to make the effort, though I did not resent it in the manner I should have done, had I been otherwise circumstanced. I ought to be the guardian of your honour, and I will. I have hitherto winked at his conduct, yet it was only because I am too much in his power to dare show my resentment, which might draw consequences on me I could never recover. But if you will indeed enable me to discharge the debt I owe him, I will soon make him sensible of a difference in my conduct: we will immediately quit this place, though whither I shall take you I know not: I have not a sixpence I can call my own; and should I raise money upon your annuity, you have

no prospect but absolute starving, as I have not a friend in the world, to whom I can apply in this emergency.'

"Never fear," I replied, "you have a friend, a firm friend, that in cases of real distress will always be ready to assist you, to the utmost of her ability. Pay this man what you owe him; I will with cheerfulness work for our future support, nor doubt but, with divine assistance, we shall overcome our difficulties; let us but quit this place, and be under no further obligations to this vile man. But, tell me, is the debt you mention all that is between you? that, I trust, will be easily discharged; you will then have nothing to fear from him."

"Ask me not, Selina," he returned in visible agitation: "no, no, that way madness lies: I cannot disclose, even to you, what thus depresses me.—Oh God, God,"

he continued, 'that memory would forget her office ! that I had forgotten myself !'

" I will not ask you, I will not solicit of you, to reveal what gives you such pain to reflect on : only remember, captain Manley, that I am your wife, bound equally to participate your griefs and pleasure : you will find me ready to share your sorrows, and, if I can, to heal them. I would not extort confidence from you, if you deem me unworthy to share it ; but of what nature must your troubles be, that you can confide them to the marquis, and withhold them from your wife ? Oh, Manley, learn to know me ; to know, that my heart is invariably yours ; that your peace is dearer to me than my own, and that to purchase it I should esteem no sacrifice too great. Why then deny to the anxious tenderness of a wife the participation of your uneasiness ?

ness? why have you confided in Monceath, and yet dare not trust me?"

"Necessity compelled me," he replied, "and were you acquainted with the circumstances you would perceive it; but, for now believe you have interest in my grief, you shall know from what it originates."

"Last june it was, as I told you, my misfortune to be overmatched at the gaming-table, though by what means I cannot tell, as I am now ashamed to confess there is ~~not~~ a finesse, or trick, that I believed was unknown to me. The event proved my knowledge was but slender: I lost every thing I possessed; even my watch was mortgaged for more than it's value. I knew not how to act. I was already considerably in Monceath's debt; I could not therefore again apply to him. Despair made me desperate, and, summon all your fortitude,

titude, Selina, while you attend, knowing he had at that time a large sum of money lying in his banker's hands, in an unfortunate moment I signed his name to a draught. It passed, and I received the money. No sooner had I done so, than my crime, with all its attendant horrors, flashed in my face. Struck to the heart by the reflexions which crowded on my mind, I determined not to make use of my ill-gotten gain, and to surrender myself to the marquis. I repaired immediately to his house, and found him at home. My countenance spoke the disorder of my mind. 'What is the matter, Manley?' said he: 'what has deranged you? are you out of your senses, man?'

"Nearly so," I replied: "but my business with you is of too serious a nature to be trifled with. Hear me with patience, Monceath, and be not rash in your determination."

mination. I have wronged, I have robbed you; but here is my ill-gotten wealth; I return it to you. Before I further explain myself, let me ask you how you would proceed against the wretch, that had counterfeited your signature, and obtained money on it.'

"Why," returned the marquis, 'prosecute him, to be sure. But wherefore this question? *you* cannot be the man.'

"*I* am that wretch," said I, 'and here I surrender myself to justice. I know I am amenable to the laws of my country; I submit to them. But, Monceath, although I have been vile enough to commit so felonious an action, my sense of it will not permit me to appropriate the money to my own use: here it is,' I continued, spreading the gold and notes on the table; 'for worlds I would not use a farthing of it. I know

this cannot save me; the deed is done; I am answerable for my crime; I am your prisoner.'

"No, no, Manley," he returned; "though you have acted unlike an honest man, yet will I save you from disgrace. Should they question me, I will acknowledge the signature: in this, at least, I will be a true friend: upon my honour I will not take advantage of this confession. But come, cheer up, man; take the money; it is as much at your service, as if I had really drawn the bill for your use.'

"No, Monceath," I replied, "not a pence of it shall ever touch my hands: this proceeding has opened my eyes to the misery attached to the life of a gamester; from this moment I forswear a card or die; could I but retrieve my affairs, I would endeavour at a perfect reformation.'

"Pshaw!

“ Pshaw ! pshaw ! man,’ he replied, ‘ never think of forswearing the dice : you have been imprudent, I grant, but your folly is known only to me, and with me it is perfectly safe. If you mean or wish, that we should be friends again, let us spend the evening at the old place ; perhaps we may meet with a pigeon, and if so, we’ll pluck him neatly.’

“ He then called for wine, and we both got very much intoxicated. It was during this period he made me an offer too scandalous to mention. I was not so lost to every sense of honour, as not to resent it. He saw my anger, but, instead of softening it, haughtily said, he saw no reason for all the obligation to lie one side ; if I expected secrecy from him, he expected I should make some sacrifice to obtain it, and he knew of none he would accept but my wife.—

wife.—Shall I go on, Selina? I see how much you are agitated: I had better stop here.’

“No, no,” said I, gasping for breath, and putting my hand on his. Indeed I could scarcely respire, so much had this dreadful account affected me: of all that is possible for a woman of honesty, delicacy, and virtue to feel, I was now sensible. When he mentioned the forgery, I thought I should have died: every vein, every nerve of my heart was wrung to agony. Already I saw the dreadful consequences of this fatal transaction: I anticipated every evil; I saw all the horrid retinue of justice before me, and my mind’s eye sunk with terror from the picture: I could scarcely command myself to listen to what else might follow.

“But when he mentioned the marquis’s hint of my being the sacrifice, indignation and

and contempt were the only emotions of which I was sensible ; and I felt I dared not turn my eyes upon Manley, lest in his I should read a confirmation of my fears.

“ Proceed,” said I, in breathless agitation ; ‘ come quickly to the end of this villanous business.’ He did so :—‘ Selina, you will hate and despise me for the confession, which is to follow, and which with shame I make.

“ The dread of the punishment that would ensue, should my crime become public, made me hesitate. He took advantage of the state of my mind, and obtained my promise to accompany him hither. He was to make use of all his arguments to seduce you, and if you complained to me of his behaviour, I was to ascribe it to your vanity : I was also to give him opportunity to plead his cause.’

“ He

“ He stopped.—‘ I see, Selina, how it is ; I see your contempt and detestation of me quiver on your lip, and flash in your eyes : but recollect, this promise was extorted from me under circumstances, that took from me all command of myself ; and in a moment of inebriety, when neither my senses nor recollection were perfectly clear.

“ No sooner were the fumes of the liquor I had drunk dissipated, than every circumstance occurred to my remembrance with increased aggravation. I despised myself for the part I had acted. Ashamed of my conduct, I again hastened to Monceath, and recalled my promise. He had been to his banker’s, had owned the draft, so I had little to fear on that account. The marquis upbraided me with my conduct, and was enraged at my retracting my word, yet he appeared soon reconciled to it. Some
5 time

time after he proposed this journey, to which I could not object, as it was to his own house he was coming.

“ You now see how much I am in his power; and, should he be spiteful, he might publish this tale to the world, which would so effectually blacken my character, that all future hope of promotion would be at an end. Believe me, Selina, so much do I feel for past events, that I would be thankful for some friendly hand, to draw a trigger against me. These are the causes, which, co-operating with a temper not naturally good, have made me the tyrant you have found me.

“ I have, since I have been here, written to a gentleman to procure an exchange for me. He has so far executed his commission, that I am exchanged to a regiment expected shortly to embark for the West Indies.

Indies. Thither I shall go, and carry with me a deep sense of my crimes, and a zealous endeavour at a serious reformation, if I should yet be so fortunate as to escape the hands of justice. To do this I must, however, still carry a friendly appearance to Monceath, in whose hands my fate seems chiefly to rest. If then you will assist me, in raising the money, I will discharge my debt to him. By the time all this is settled, I hope the regiment will be ordered to embark : yet, when it comes to the point, all that I have hitherto felt will be trifling, compared to the thought of having left a wife and two children involved in penury and want ; while I, through my imprudence, have torn from them the only support on which they had to depend. My only hope is, that when your father knows I am gone, he will come forward to your assistance.'

“ Here

“ Here he ceased his narration, during which I had traced in his countenance all the emotions, which were alternately called forth by the feelings, that engrossed his mind during this recital; but these were, in the end, all sunk in despair, a despair of the most wretched kind.

“ How to counsel him I knew not; and yet, in the wretched situation of his mind, he demanded not only counsel, but pity and consolation. That he thoroughly repented his errors I now no longer doubted, and, but for one fatal circumstance, they might have been easily overlooked; it rested, therefore, with me to determine what to do.

“ Now, my dear Manley,’ said I, ‘ that you have disburdened your heart, you will find in it a relief that you did not expect: believe me, while I condemn your errors, I feel for your sufferings; and while you
are

are steady in your resolution to reform, I shall respect your sorrows too much, to hazard your peace of mind by disagreeable recrimination, or heart-wounding reproach. With the greatest readiness I agree to any means, that will enable you to discharge your debts to this man; and, much as I shall feel at our separation, I shall yet rejoice at any event that will secure you from danger; but till the hour of your embarkation arrives, submit to be guided by me. He readily consented to abide by any plan I should think it best to pursue.

“ I then sent to Mr. Davis, from whose benevolent attention and uniform goodness I augured much. To him I related as much of the business as I thought necessary for him to be acquainted with. He kindly proposed an asylum to my husband in his house, where, under a feigned name, he

was

was to take up his residence ; myself and my children were content with a very humble apartment at the house of a poor cottager, which was situate in the centre of a wood ; a place where there could be little chance of discovery. We invested our friend with full powers to act for us, and he undertook the affair of raising the money ; this was soon done, and before a fortnight had elapsed, we quitted the castle, giving the bailiff and his wife reason to believe we were going into Cumberland.

“ The next business was to settle the amount of the marquis’s debt : this took within fifty pounds of the whole sum we had raised on the annuity. Captain Manley then wrote to the secretary at war, acquainting him where he might be found ; this information was, however, erroneous, as,

as, for fear of discovery, we had gotten a friend of Mr. Davis's, who lived at a distance, to receive any letters that came.

“Time now moved, or rather dragged with leaden feet, and the constant dread we were under, least either Manley or myself should be discovered, still added to it's apparent tardiness. At length arrived the so much dreaded mandate for my husband's departure: he had but one week to prepare for it. Doubly endeared to me by misfortunes, more worthy than ever of my love, I considered this summons as the greatest misfortune of my life.

“Since our departure from Tregwyllynd, since the discovery of the fatal cause of his sorrow, his conduct had been uniformly tender and kind; and he appeared anxious to convince me of the sincerity of his reformation. Short was my duration

of happiness, never had I felt before the comforts arising from reciprocal affection and mutual confidence; and although, had he staid, we should have had years of penury and want to combat, yet how would it have been softened by the pleasure of considering myself instrumental to this noble change of conduct.

“ The morning of our separation now dawned : the evening prior to it, my husband passed at the cottage ; at the early hour of four Mr. Davis, in a chaise, drew up to the door. The night had been spent by me in all the bitterness of anguish, nor had sleep once deigned to visit my eye-lids.

“ My children were still sleeping, when their father drew near, to take his final leave of them : he kissed first one, then the other, the big tears straying unheeded
down

down his face. ‘ Dear helpless innocents,’ he called them ; then kneeling by the side of the bed ; ‘ gracious God,’ he said ; ‘ if the prayer of a wretch like me can be acceptable, shower down, on the heads of these sweet slumberers, thy choicest blessings ; be thou their guardian, support, and father ; protected by thee they shall escape the snares of vice, and avoid those dangers, in which their father is involved.’ Then again kissing his boy ; ‘ Heaven bless you, my child—I dare not ; may you make a better man than your father ; you will then be a happier one :’ it was with difficulty he could utter these words.

“ Language cannot describe our parting. I wept in his arms with unutterable anguish, my mind sadly presaging our parting was eternal—that we should meet no more !

“ Oh,

“ Oh, Selina !” said he, “ forgive me : but for the injuries you have suffered, and for those wants which are to come, you will reflect on me with hatred and disgust : as you taste the bitterness of poverty, how will you curse the author of your miseries !”

“ Never, never, my dearest Manley,” I returned ; “ whatever I have, whatever I may suffer, I have brought upon myself ; never against you shall one ungrateful or repining word escape my lips. Are you not the father of my children, and shall they and the unborn be taught to reprobate their other parent ? surely not ; know me better, my dear Manley :—go while I can part with you—think of me—write frequently to me ;—perhaps something may happen, to reconcile us to my father, and then we shall again be happy, happier than ever.”

“ He then rose to go ; still I found pretexts for detaining him ; till Mr. Davis, seeing there was no likelihood of our separating, and knowing the danger of delay, said, ‘ Fye, fye, madam, you a soldier’s wife ! come, come, you should animate your husband by your fortitude, not depress him with your tears : he will soon return covered with laurels ; then think how you will ridicule your present fears. Come, fir, one parting kiss is all I allow you ; we will then depart.’

“ Dear Davis,’ said my husband, ‘ to you I leave the charge of my wife and children : as far as you can, protect them from insult and unkindness : depend upon it, the first money I receive they shall partake. No tongue can express the conflict I sustain here,’ said he, laying his hand on his heart, ‘ to know that through my
misconduct

misconduct they are left to struggle with poverty and disgrace. Oh ! it wounds me beyond the possibility of description.— Adieu, God bless you, my beloved, my much injured wife ; may you never see, never feel half the sorrow, with which I am torn.

“ He then left me. I sunk into a chair that was next me—Is he gone, said I—is he really gone, and for ever ? Oh ! what a desolate being am I ! I listened in an agony to the sound of the wheels, till I heard them no longer. I then leaned forward to the window, tracing their track, till my eyes were so obscured by tears, I could not even discern them : then, feeling as if every comfort was withdrawn from me, I returned to my children’s apartment ; they were still sleeping. ‘ Dear fatherless babes,’ said I, while the tears poured in

torrents from my eyes, 'you, with your hapless mother, are now left alone in the world; my father inexorable, my husband gone; nothing but poverty and misery to expect; no other prospect but that of want to look to, dear helpless children, little wretches whom I have brought into this world of misery, whither shall I turn for your support, or to whom can I apply for assistance? Thus I continued, till exhausted by the violence of my emotion, I lost all sense of sorrow in a languid stupor.

“ From this I was roused by the woman of the house coming to me, and informing me I was wanted; that a gentleman was below, who said he must see me directly. Astonished and alarmed, a thousand fears for my husband's safety rose to distress me; I immediately concluded, that some dreadful

ful

ful accident had happened, to prevent the prosecution of his plan. All that I had hitherto suffered was trivial, to what I now endured, from the distracting apprehensions I laboured under; every idea that could possibly arise to torment me, I believe, filled my mind. I was fearful of going down, dreading to hear what had happened, yet anxious to be relieved from the dreadful suspense under which I laboured.

“ Desiring my landlady, therefore, to dress my children, with trembling and agitated steps I descended to the parlour. For some minutes my hand rested upon the lock of the door; my heart beat with terror, and I hardly drew breath; at length I summoned courage to enter: as I opened the door, the marquis of Monceath met my eye. Indignation and astonishment prevented my speaking, till he advanced to-

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wards

wards me, smiling, and offering to take my hand.

“ Dear lady Selina,” said this bold man, ‘ how happy I am to see you ! What pleasure it gives me once more to behold you ! Am I so fortunate as to be likely to see Manley, before he leaves England ? I came on purpose to take my leave of him.’

“ He is gone already, sir, he went——”

“ This morning, did he not ? You see, my dear madam, I am acquainted with all your motions : was it possible I could remain insensible to any thing, that concerned lady Selina Manley ? No, madam, I have long known where you have been ; have long watched you in secret. Oh, most adorable of women !’ said he, throwing himself at my feet, ‘ pity me, do not drive me to despair, permit me sometimes to see
and

and visit you: you know I am your friend, and the friend of your husband; suffer me, then, to use that privilege, by placing you in a different situation from that in which I now see you: try me, and you shall find I am ready to perform any of your commands.'

"That is, sir, then," I haughtily replied, 'to leave me; there is not a person upon earth I so little wish to see as the gentleman before me: and, since as you say, you have watched my steps, and every action is known to you, why did you not present yourself while Manley was present? why seize the first moment of his absence to convince me of my unprotected state? Know, sir, I despise both you and your offers; believe me, there is no situation, however obscure; there is no wretchedness, however great, that I would not brave, sooner

sooner than owe obligations to the marquis of Monceath.'

"Dear lady Selina," he replied, 'what have I done to incur your displeasure? When we last parted we were friends, since then you have quitted my house: you have distressed yourself to discharge the paltry sums your husband was indebted; you receive me with coolness and incivility, and all this without assigning any cause.'

"Do you call this no cause?" said I. 'Is there any reason for my assigning one? If you have any monitor within, it cannot be silent; if not, here is a memento, that cannot fail.' I then presented his letter; he took it, cast his eyes over it; for an instant his cheek was suffused with a blush, but soon recovering this transient shame: 'This letter, madam,' said he, 'was written in a moment of inebriety; you see it

it was never finished: had I had intention of putting this menace into execution, I could easily have done it; your husband is still in my power, and that in a way—'

"Stop, stop, sir, for God's sake wound not my ears with the repetition of a crime that harrows up my soul to think of! I own you have in this circumstance behaved kindly, I will not say honourably; for had you not some sinister purpose to fulfil by it, and when you proposed a visit to Tregwyllynd was not your moderation to the husband to be rewarded with the virtue of the wife? Fye, fye, sir, is this your boasted generosity? was not this the purpose of your visit?"

"It was, madam. I never ceased to regret, that I was not the man honoured by your choice. It was my firm intention, had I been so happy, to have shown the

incredulous world (in the language of the immortal Shakespear) the noble change I had meditated : fate ordained it otherwise. That I have been a scoundrel, I confess, with shame confess it ; but still, madam, it is in your power to reform me. I love you more than man ever loved a woman : you can form me to any thing ; my heart is in your hand, take it, mould it as you please."

" I should be rejoiced, sir, I acknowledge, to be the humble instrument of reformation to any one ; but you, sir, do not pursue the way that bespeaks the desire : and must I, sir, sink myself to infamy to reform you ? A declaration of love from you I look upon as the greatest insult you can offer, especially in my present situation. If these be the first steps toward your meditated reformation, they are, I believe,

believe,

lieve, wide of the design. I confess it is altogether a new system, and should be published to the world, that the first advance to an amendment in conduct is, by taking the advantage of your friend's absence, to attempt the seduction of his wife.'

"Have a care, madam; you may rouse a sleeping lion: your husband has not yet left England; in common prudence, then, I would advise you not to be too severe.'

"Mean, despicable wretch! Do you threaten me with the prosecution of my husband, should I resist your infamous desires? Is this your boasted friendship to him, and your pretended love to me? True love seeks the happiness of its object.'

"I acknowledge it, madam, and so would I in every thing seek yours, could I

have but the slightest hope of a return of affection; but if, through your severity, you drive me to another course of conduct, may you not thank yourself for the consequences? Love, according to your own opinion, knows no middle state; the heart, that is formed for it, cannot but be sensible in the extreme, and it's hatred may become as violent as it's love is intemperate; therefore, madam, for your own sake I warn you, turn not the affection mine feels for you into dislike; at present it beats with the most unbounded love for you.'

"It's own violence will then exhaust it. As a friend I advise you, to quit the sight of an object, that may serve to nourish, but never can return the affection you feel for her; her heart is invariably her husband's; from her duty to him she will
never

never swerve; alike answerable for the propriety of her conduct, whether he be absent or present, it will be her pride to live so as to defy the voice of slander.'

"At this distance from the world, my dear madam," returned the marquis, "you are out of the reach of slander; be not uneasy on that account; at Tregwyllynd, here, or any where you please, be it ever so remote from the metropolis, I will, with pleasure, agree to living."

"Where shall I go to be out of the reach of conscience, sir? and what inducement have you to offer strong enough to reconcile me to the loss of my own approbation and peace of mind? How can I, as my children grow up, enforce the necessity of virtue in them, if I deviate from the practice? or how could I bear to look on them, and think they were supported

ported by the wages of adultery? No, sir, know me better, sorrow, religion, and retirement have taught me better lessons; I am prepared with fortitude to encounter poverty and distress, but I am not prepared in the same moment to encounter the stings of reproach, or the heart-wounding consciousness of having violated my marriage vow. Though, in the early part of life, I deviated from the duty due from a child to a parent, that very deviation has brought with it such accumulated sorrows, that it tells me, the right way is the happiest and best, and I shall at least endeavour to pursue it; at any rate I shall not act in direct opposition to every law of virtue and of honour.

“My children now came running into the room; Emma recognized her old acquaintance,

quaintance and play-fellow; and Henry held out his little arms to go to him.

“ See, my dear lady Selina,” said he, ‘ what an interest I have made with your children; why will you be less kind than they are?’

“ Because I will not have my name enrolled in the catalogue of infamy; because I will, if possible, transmit it unsullied to posterity. Never shall it be said, that, to all the evil qualities lord Delmore’s daughter possessed, she added that of an adulteress: no, never shall his ears be disgraced by the sound; never shall the fair fame of my mother be sullied by giving birth to infamy and dishonour; let my misfortunes be what they may, and troubles rain upon my head as thick as the dews of Heaven, I trust the Almighty will enable me to struggle with them; but,
should

should I sink under their pressure, I will, if possible, fall innocently. Oh ! my children,' said I, clasping them both to my bosom, 'for what are we reserved ! To what new insults shall we be next exposed ! Deserted and unprotected as we are, are we not already sunk into objects of misery ?'

" I burst into tears : the marquis appeared much hurt ; he staid some time as if in deep thought, then advancing towards me, said, with a countenance evidently struggling with his feelings, 'I will leave you, madam ; never, if you require it, to see you more ; let my future conduct convince you, that, though I have been vile and vicious, I am not so far lost to virtue, as not to admire and even emulate it. I will tease you no longer with my love ; from this moment I am your friend, a friend divested of passion, of
blond interest

interest of every kind, save for your welfare. Hear me, madam, therefore, with patience, while I entreat of you to accept, from my hands, what will place you in a situation more accordant to your birth, and more pleasant than your present one appears. If you will but grant me this request, I will take the most solemn oath, never to violate any retirement you may choose to fix on. The whole business shall be transacted through an agent, I will not even appear in it. Accept it, madam, as a debt justly your due, for the many uneasy hours I have given you; and, as a recompense due to your virtues. I will give you a week to consider upon my proposal: but, as a solace to your mind, let me here pledge my sacred word of honour, not to impede Manley's journey, or let one syllable of past occurrences escape my lips. I leave you, madam,

wretched

wretched in myself for having given you cause of offence ; and convinced, that there indeed is an awe, dignifying a truly virtuous woman, which, like the glorious rays of the sun, dazzles while it warms. You, madam, will I trust have the glory of converting me to virtue ; if the feelings of my heart could but at this moment be exposed to your view, they would tell you what I am unable to express.' He then bowed and left the house.

" An event of this nature served to call off my mind from it's present sorrows. As I ruminated upon what had passed, the strangeness of the marquis's conduct astonished me. I could not reconcile the mixture of baseness and generosity, which he exhibited. That he should fly with such avidity from one extreme to the other, made me doubt the sincerity of his professions
and

and repentance. I did not hesitate in firmly resolving not to accept assistance from him. Alas ! said I, as I still revolved his conduct in my mind, but for me these latent sparks of virtue, which now appear, would have been earlier called forth ; they might, by this time, have blazed into a flame, and convinced the world, that goodness was not quite extinct.

“ The thoughts of the marquis, however, soon wore away. My mind had more particular griefs, on which to dwell : the parting with my husband ; the chance there was, that we should never meet again ; the unhealthfulness of the climate, to which he was going, and, above all, the dreadful carnage of war, combined to fill my thoughts with a gloomy sadness, that took from me all hopes of better days. Then again I reverted to the desolate situation, in which

we

we were left, a bill of twenty-five pounds, beside a few guineas, and some trinkets, was whole of my fortune. Good God, said I, mentally, desert me not in this trying necessity; give me but patience and fortitude to combat these difficulties, support me through the painful hour which is approaching, and let thy will be done.

“ In the course of three days Mr. Davis returned, and brought with him letters from my husband, filled with tenderness, solicitude, and anxiety for us. They were, indeed, the true portraits of a mind sinking under it's own weight, and breathing the very spirit of melancholy in every line. Sad as they were, I yet derived pleasure from them. It was one of my chief consolations, to retire for hours, and read and weep over them.

“ I con-

“ I consulted Mr. Davis respecting my future plan, telling him of the visit I had from the marquis, and of the offers he had made. He was not so delicate about my receiving assistance from him; but said, provided he abided by his word never to molest me, he thought I might, without infringing the laws of honour and delicacy, accept his offer; ‘ to say truth, my dear madam,’ said he, ‘ I conceive it to be no more than your right; and think you ought to take it as such, since from what the captain dropped, he seemed to say he owed his ruin to the marquis and his schemes; therefore, as he himself is sensible, that through his means you are thus reduced, there can be no impropriety in your accepting his offer.’ As this advice, though well meant, did not accord with my ideas of propriety, I determined to abide by my resolution

resolution of remaining totally independent of him.

“Towards the latter end of the week, I received a letter from the marquis, of which the following is a copy.

From the marquis of Monceath, to lady Selina Manley.

“WITH a deep sense of shame do I, my dear madam, submit to your perusal the following lines. I must begin without preface or apology, for indeed I can make none. To comment upon them would disenable me from the continuance of the task I have assigned myself; a task which, with my present feelings, I find painful in the extreme to execute, being no less than a recapitulation of vices and actions, the memory of which fill me with remorse.

“ From

“ From the first hour of my acquaintance with your ladyship, I admired you, and that admiration soon strengthened into a warmer sentiment; I soon found, that I had nothing to expect but disappointment. The match your friends were so studious to promote between yourself and cousin, I was convinced could not be agreeable to you; I saw your dislike of Aulange, and on that dislike I built fresh hopes; the event proved I was deceived; you refused me. As I truly loved you, the refusal sunk deep into my heart: I avoided seeing you, that I might not nourish a flame which consumed me. Upon your marriage with Manley I renewed my acquaintance with him; we had known each other at Oxford, were fellow students in the same college, and our pursuits being nearly the same, we had been upon terms of intimacy.

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that intimacy was, however, broken off, by his departure for the continent ; I availed myself of our former acquaintance, to gain admission to your house ; I saw you (pardon me, madam, while I write it) surrounded by a train of coxcombs ; I judged their conversation was not disagreeable to you ; neglected by your husband, fond of gayety, and the amusements of London, I considered you as one of those unthinking females, who are to be won by flattery. My passion for you knew no bounds ; I was never easy from your presence, and I still entertained a hope, that it would be gratified. You forbade me your house, you treated me with the contempt and disdain I deserved ; inflamed by passion, maddened by the style in which my proposals were received, I vowed solemnly either to effect my purpose or your ruin. At Brookes's I was sure of meeting

Manley ; I knew, that his chief resources were drawn thence ; I pretended an attachment to gambling, and by way of apology for so suddenly absenting myself from the circles, which I had so lately been frequenting, I pretended to declare myself sick of the company of women. I renewed my acquaintance with lady Aulange, whose inveteracy against you still continued undiminished. She now almost lived in St. James's-square, and took every opportunity of degrading you in the opinion of your father. She would eagerly seize the least intelligence of your misconduct, and display it in aggravated colours to the earl, by this means strengthening his displeasure. I commenced my operations against you by insinuations both to your father and husband, of the lightness of your conduct ; the former I made believe it

amounted almost to criminality, while to Manley I urged the necessity of removing you from town. I soon brought him to think as I did; I offered Tregwyllynd; it was accepted. I now thought I had you completely in my power: at any rate I could visit the castle when I thought proper. At his return from Tregwyllynd, I met him again at the old place; he confessed to me, that he had lately had such very ill success, that he was quite out of cash. This confession opened to me a new source of revenge; by assisting his wants, I should get him so much in my power, as to make my own terms. For a length of time he discharged all his pecuniary obligations, with a punctuality at which I was surprized. I saw that he understood the finesse of most games, and that, while that was the case, I should not gain any advantage

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age over him ; I therefore proposed a new game, and introduced him to a set of sharpers, by whom he was completely ruined. I took care to be absent the evening this plan was put in execution, as I was fearful of incurring his suspicions.

“ Manley, heated by the game, and furious from despair, laid himself so open to his adversaries, that they declared they had no merit in winning. I knew he had no resource but in myself, and I waited in expectation of seeing him, resolved to make my own terms. Chance favoured my design ; it laid him under an obligation he never could repay. After the commission of an action like that which so effectually put him into my power, I conceived all delicacy was at an end, yet shame so far conquered my design, that I was obliged

to have recourse to the bottle, ere I could make my proposal.

“ Delivered from the fears, which had so lately predominated, and grateful for my conduct on this occasion, in a moment of inebriety he consented to give up all his interest in you. This was the point, at which I had so long aimed; this was the end, for which his ruin was effected, and which you were dragged from society to promote. With a gladsome heart I proposed an immediate visit to Tregwyllynd: he consented, and in two days we were to have set out.

“ But no sooner were the fumes of the liquor he had drunk dissipated, than recollection returned with all her force; he was at my bed-side almost before I was awake.

“ I have come,’ said he, ‘ to retract the villanous assent I yesterday gave to your proposal;

proposal: I will suffer any torments, endure any disgrace, rather than be guilty of so despicable an action. I know, Monceath, I am in your power; I know, that on one word of yours depends my existence: still, however, dear as existence may be, I cannot purchase it at such a price; I cannot, I must not, to save myself, sink my wife to infamy; already too deeply immersed in the abyss of guilt, I must not plunge deeper, and drag with me an innocent and helpless woman. The crime I have already committed cannot now be recalled: I rely upon your generosity, as a man, whether I be to suffer the punishment due to it; if I be, I hope I shall have fortitude to meet it, rather than add to my dishonour by an action, that would render me still more contemptible in the eyes of

the world, and make me, if possible, more hateful to myself than I already am.'

" To expostulate upon so delicate a subject I knew would be madness; I therefore affected scarcely to remember our conversation, and treated it as an effect of intemperance: nevertheless, I inwardly resolved to visit the castle; for, judging of you by those of your sex, with whom I had been successful, I fancied, that revenge for the wrongs you had suffered from your husband, and the attentions of another, might induce you to be favourable to me.

" After a few weeks I again proposed a visit to Tregwyllynd; and though, I believe, he doubted my motives, he could not raise an objection. My passion now increased to a degree, at which I myself was alarmed: every proof of your excellence, every vir-

tue

tue which you practised, and which each day called forth, strengthened it. That I might, in some degree, assimilate my character with yours, I adopted manners, which were widely at war with my intentions. At length, tired with acting the hypocrite, and resolved no longer to procrastinate the design, for which I visited the castle, I contrived a scheme, which would have effectually put you into my power, had not your better angel saved you from destruction. An illness, with which I was seized at Gloucester, prevented my plan being executed at the proposed time; and you, by your removal from the castle, hindered it's ever taking effect.

“ Upon my return to Tregwyllynd, I learned from my bailiff, that you had removed to Cumberland. Thither I determined to follow; but, having business in

London, I was obliged to go thither first. From my attorney I learned the amount of the debt Manley owed me having been discharged. I was surprized at this intelligence, and began to be alarmed, lest my plots were discovered. I went to the secretary at war; from him I obtained Manley's address. Determined to see you, I again set out for that purpose, but was once more disappointed, as I found you received your letters through the medium of a second person. I was fixed not to give up the pursuit, and at length, through watching and bribery, I learned your real address.

“ I was convinced, that you had some motives for the secrecy you affected, and began at last to be pretty well assured, that it was of myself you were fearful. I therefore resolved, to conceal myself. This concealment I effected by means of a cottager, whom

whom I bound to secrecy by my gifts. I now had an opportunity of watching and knowing all your proceedings, as the countryman learned them from the people, with whom you lodged. By his means I was informed of the day and hour of Manley's departure. I thought of presenting myself before you, as if by accident; but not immediately, lest I might alarm your fears, and injure my own cause. The natural impatience of my temper would not, however, brook delay. You were now, I reflected, wholly in my power; you had no person near you, to rise in your defence; for the people at the cottage were to be purposely absent, and I resolved to use stratagem, if not worse means, to effect my purpose. A second consideration, however, told me, that if, under the mask of friendship, or by means of any benefits in my power to confer,

I could bring you to consent to my wishes, how much my expected happiness would be enhanced.

“No sooner was I convinced, that Manley was really gone, than I experienced the most violent emotion: my heart beat with rapture at the thought, that there was now no obstacle, to prevent the accomplishment of my design, and the exulting transport of hope and expectation almost overpowered me.

“That I might overcome the ferment in which my spirits now were, I sat out to walk, without any fixed design of going to any particular place. By an irresistible impulse my feet were guided to the spot, where all my wishes centred. I saw you: you treated me as I merited. I was offended by your irony, and inwardly swore, that nothing should deter me from executing

cuting my project ; yet, when I saw your tears, heard you deplore the peculiar severity of your fate, and listened to the virtue and piety, which dictated every sentiment you uttered, something like remorse struck on my heart.

“ As I contemplated your figure, when in the action of clasping your children to your breast, I cannot say what I felt, I cannot define the sensation I then experienced. I viewed your situation, heard you call yourself helpless, and pitifully implore protection of Heaven. I thought, at that moment, how unlike the conduct of a man was mine. Had not I been the principal means of rendering that situation as terrible as it was ? Was not I the cause of your being unprotected and defenceless ? Was not I the chief agent, that had produced your ruin ? Yet, not content, I wished and tried to sink

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you

you still lower. Unable to conquer or repress my feelings, I only breathed out a promise not to molest you, and quitted you for ever.

“ Yes, dearest lady Selina, your virtue, your innocence, your piety, have conquered a libertine; have taught him respect to the sufferings and sorrows of distressed virtue; have caused him to look back with shame upon the past, and sedulously endeavour to emulate the bright example you have set. Condescend, dearest madam, to make me your banker, and Tregwyllynd your home: not as a gift, but as a right I intreat your acceptance of it. I cannot offer apologies for a conduct, the baseness of which has been unparalleled. To vindicate it is impossible; I can only intreat you to forgive and pity a man, whose whole remaining life will, though it should last a century, be too short,

short to expiate the offences he has committed.

“ I leave England in a few weeks, perhaps never more to return to it. I would fain convince you, that I am not now acting the hypocrite; I would fain convince you, that my repentance is sincere. I shall go to St. James's square, and there use all the influence I possess with the earl, to bring about a reconciliation. Should I be so happy as to succeed, I shall again have the honour of addressing you; should I not, the only comfort I can derive in my absence will be to know, that you will no longer be a sufferer by pecuniary difficulties. I write in hope, my dear madam, that you will not negative my proposal, which I once more intreat you to accept as a reward for your sufferings. Let it be as a mark of your forgiveness; and, by so doing,

doing, give me the hope, that I am not quite an object of detestation to you. This hope will convey comfort to the tortured breast of

MONCEATH.'

"As I commented upon this letter, I was particularly struck with the malignity of lady Aulange. I had not, save in the affair with her son, ever knowingly offended her; but, when I reflected on her character and sentiments, I no longer wondered at her conduct. Avarice was the predominant feature in it: to gratify that passion no sacrifice was too great; and since the fortunes of the earl could not, by the union of the families, enrich her son, that this darling hope might not be disappointed, she was base enough still more to incense an angry father against his offending child, that, by lowering me in his opinion, and
repre-

representing my conduct in the most unfavourable point of view, she might contrive to make her children the heirs to his fortune: thus, every prospect she had formed, from the conduct she had adopted, would be answered.

“ I was delighted, as I read, to find, that my father had once shown an inclination to be friendly towards me. ‘ He may yet forgive me,’ said I; ‘ and oh how richly will every past suffering be recompensed by his returning kindness !’

“ This idea animated my heart, and gave colour to my cheek. I encouraged the delusion, and, for a short space, felt as happy as if he had already pronounced my forgiveness: but no sooner had these visionary and chimerical hopes vanished, than I was more painfully alive to my present sorrows; for reason told me, forgiveness from
my

my father I must never expect. From one extreme I went immediately to the other, and abandoned myself to the despair, which now in turn so fully possessed my breast.

“What a fate is mine!” said I: ‘with how many miserable hours has my disobedience made me acquainted, and how many more appear in long array before me! When will they end, or how will they terminate? Am I not a daughter deserted by her parent, a wife separated from her husband, poverty and misery hovering over me? Am I not too likely to give birth to another little wretch, who may live to curse me, for bringing it into such a world of misery? Oh horror! horror!’ I exclaimed; ‘to be cursed by my father and my child, it is too, too much; human nature cannot endure it!’ Thus I continued, till relieved and softened by the tears, which now flowed abundantly: I felt melancholy

melancholy and unhappy, but not despairing, or poignantly wretched.

“ As soon as my emotion had a little subsided, I again took up the letter. Very different were the feelings, which now operated on my harrassed mind. Contempt, anger, fear, and hatred, by turns succeeded, as I read of the villany and malice of one man, and the credulity and folly, not to say worse, of the other. I forgave and pitied the marquis; but it was a pity so nearly bordering on contempt, that I almost doubted the sentiment. I resolved, however, not to be obliged to him, save in his attempt to reconcile me to my father. I immediately wrote to him, firmly, but politely, declining his offered kindness. I said not a word about the earl, as I left it to himself to act in that respect as he pleased, as I feared he might take that method

method of drawing me into a correspondence; for I could not but yet doubt the sincerity of a man, who had given such reiterated proofs of duplicity.

“ I now soon removed to a small neat lodging in the town, that I might be near Mr. Davis, as I determined not to leave the neighbourhood till after my lying-in; and, that I might be earning a little, I endeavoured to procure needle-work. From so very poor a place as Llanbeder much could not be expected; though I was sometimes employed by the better sort of the inhabitants in milienery. I tried also to establish a day school; but, as I could not speak welsh, I was considered as incompetent to the undertaking.

“ I used the utmost economy in managing my poor possessions. And here let me pay a tribute to the disinterested kindness
and

and liberality of Mr. Davis, who seized every opportunity of conferring kindnesses on me; and that in so truly delicate a way, that the most rigid prude could not have been offended.

“ Thus I went on for another four months; and I now advanced near that period, which might relieve me from all my troubles. As I contemplated this subject, the thoughts of my children filled my mind with dismay: as I reflected upon their helpless, unprotected state, how truly orphans they would then be, my heart shuddered, and, but for the friendly relief of tears, it would at times have burst. Yet it was after such moments as these, that I felt the consolations of religion; that I felt an assurance of hope, which nothing but a strict reliance on the mercies of Providence, and implicit trust in the promises made in
Scripture

Scripture could inspire. Often has my heart glowed with fervour, and my imagination been raised above all earthly enjoyments, as I contemplated the vast concerns of eternity.

“ I now wanted little better than a month of my time, when my dear boy was taken ill. Mr. Davis came immediately to him. One look of his confirmed all my misery; it told me I had nothing to expect. For three weeks my darling laid in the greatest agony: I never quitted his bed-side; and the anxiety, care, and fatigue I suffered during this period is inconceivable.

“ At the end of this time my dear Mary first saw light. My good friend would then fain have removed my boy to his house. I would not agree to this proposal; indeed I could not suffer him out of my sight, but had him placed in the bed with me. In
vain

vain he represented the extreme injury I should do to myself by watching him: I well knew there was no care like a mother's, and the tenderness of maternal love could not be supplied by any second person.

“ Mr. Davis used all his powers to fortify my mind against the fatal hour, that was to bereave me of my hope. He begged me, to call philosophy and religion to my aid: it was in vain; the tide of grief, with which I was overwhelmed, bore down all opposition; it admitted not of consolation. I performed my duty, as it were mechanically, to my dear Mary; I felt little interest in it; all my feelings were absorbed by that dear object, who lay expiring at my side. As I saw the convulsions, which tore his frame; as I heard the breath grow shorter and shorter, witnessed the struggle he had for respiration, and saw the dreadful appearance

appearance of death in a face so tenderly beloved, no wonder that every feeling of my soul was absorbed by him.

“ And must I part with you, my child,” I cried ; ‘ must the cold and icy hand of death be laid upon you, and the dark grave contain that form, upon which I have so often hung delighted ? Shall those eyes be closed eternally upon your mother, never more to sparkle with pleasure at her approach, or look with regret at her departure ? O wretched being that I am ! how do my sorrows accumulate ! when and where will they end ! not till the same dark mansion is prepared for me, which now unlocks it’s horrid jaws, to receive my angel ! Merciful Father,’ said I, sinking down, and for the last time clasping my boy to my heart, ‘ desert me not in this calamitous hour ! Oh, give me fortitude

tude to support myself through this trying scene ! Oh, my child !' I continued still pressing his loved form to my breast, ' we must part, the fiat has gone forth; already is the film of death shading those eyes ! O God, God !' I exclaimed, ' when will he be released from this agony !—Gracious Heaven, another convulsion, and now all is over !—And art thou, my child, an angel ? and is thy pure and innocent soul already on the wing toward the skies ? Yes, yes, I lament, but he rejoices ! I lose my child, he gains eternity.'

" I now sat patiently contemplating him ; I could not weep, but felt a consciousness of wretchedness, that defied tears. This, the very day week which gave birth to one child, deprived me of the other ! Cruel and inexorable death ! how soon did thy ruthless hand crop, while in the bud, the fairest

fairest promise of the garden ! and tear from the parent root that shoot, upon which it's chief hopes depended !

“ Mr. Davis, to whom I had sent, now entered. He had the body of my darling removed to his own house, from which, in a very humble manner, it was conveyed to it's last peaceful mansion.

“ From the extreme anguish and anxiety I had undergone, I became extremely ill ; and it was not without great difficulty I performed the office of nurse to my little Mary, who, however, did not suffer by my indisposition.

“ The blow, which my boy's illness and death gave to my constitution, I have never recovered ; and the succeeding events of my life have totally undermined it. I know I am retiring fast from this life ; I know that very shortly the fell spectre will seize

on me. I leave my children friendless, and unprotected ; they will be thrown upon the mercy of a pitiless world. Yet still I trust, that the Being, who called them into life, will protect them through it. He will be their friend, though they should be deprived of every other ; when my heart is no longer sensible of feeling, my eye of seeing, and I have no power of relieving their wants, he will supply them, and be to them every friend in one. In this sweet hope, which grows to an assurance, I shall calmly, and I hope patiently, wait for that hour, which will call me hence, and re-unite me to my child.

“ But not further to digress :—No sooner was my health re-established, than I resolved to leave Llanbeder, and, if possible, get to London. This I was the more anxious to do, as every thing about this place served

to remind me of my loss, and was food for that dejection, which preyed so heavily on my spirits. Besides, in London there was a chance, nay almost a certainty, of my obtaining some kind of employment. I consulted Mr. Davis, who would fain have dissuaded me from my purpose, pressing me much to remain where I was ; assuring me, I should never suffer an inconvenience, while he had the power of removing it ; for he regarded me as a kind of sacred deposit, entrusted to his care ; and, therefore, he considered himself answerable for my safety. I thanked him gratefully for his kindness, but told him, that I should be wretched, were I to be a tax upon his benevolence ; that, if I went to London, I might yet be noticed by my father, but distant as I now was, it was next to impossible he could hear any thing concerning

cerning me, and might be led to imagine, I wilfully kept out of his way. This argument, I knew, would have weight; I therefore gained my point: but the next difficulty was, how to accomplish my purpose. Nine guineas were all my stock, and with this I had to transport myself and children upwards of two hundred and forty miles. To do so by land was impossible, I therefore proposed going by sea, but delayed my voyage, till I should receive letters from my husband, which in about three weeks afterwards I did. They contained the pleasing intelligence of his being promoted to a majority. He apologized for not making a remittance to me, but gave me hopes, that by his next letters he should be able to do so.

“ Here again I felt a fresh instance of the generous delicacy of Mr. Davis, who

had, by the same packet, received a letter from Manley; and pretended, that his enclosed a fifteen pound note for my use. I asked to see the letter; he hesitated. 'No matter,' he said, 'that was the chief of it's contents, and there it was for me.' I saw through his generous design, and refused accepting it, alleging the true reason, that he was the donor, and, I knew, could ill spare a sum of the kind. He as firmly refused taking it back, saying, 'it was none of his.' To be short, there was no alternative, and I was forced to accept it. It was a fortune to me; I secured my passage, and in ten days after, having taken an affectionate leave of my nobly disinterested friend, I embarked with my darlings.

"Except the usual inconveniences of sickness, I had no cause to complain of our voyage,

voyage, which was speedily performed, the wind being fair the whole way. I landed at Deptford with my little charges, and in one of the stages proceeded to London.

“ I shall not stop to tell the sensations I experienced at again entering this great city; they were by no means pleasant. The very different circumstances, in which I now was, to what I had ever before been accustomed, struck upon my heart with peculiar weight, and increased my dejection.

“ I was sadly at a loss how to proceed. I had not a lodging taken: I knew little of the town, and the little I did know was in a part, where I did not now wish to be recognized. At length I recollected the nurse, who had attended me in my lying-in; I took a coach to her lodgings, and fortunately met with her. She was much surprised

prised to see me, but more so when she heard my motives for visiting her, which I very candidly explained, and asked her assistance in procuring me an apartment. This she readily performed, and before eight in the evening, I was settled in my new habitation. I had but two rooms shabbily furnished, for which I paid eight shillings a week, and agreed to give another to the girl, to keep them clean, and do other menial offices for me.

“ My next care was to procure employment. At first I painted fan-mounts, which nurse sold for me, to people of distinction, whom she attended. They bought them with avidity, and I had almost more to do than I could accomplish.

“ The woman with whom I lodged was remarkably fond of children, and would nurse my Mary for a day together ; nurse
also

also spent all her leisure time with me. Thus, through their means, I could devote more time to my business, than I could otherwise have spared : but on those days, when I could not get assistance to nurse the child, I used to make up for my lost time, by rising at three or four o'clock in the morning.

“ I afterwards painted and designed trimmings for gowns, which I got disposed of in the same way ; my kind friend always taking them home, and bringing orders to me. By these means I gained a tolerable subsistence, sometimes earning a guinea and a half, and sometimes, but very rarely, two guineas a week.

“ The little leisure I had was devoted to my children. I taught Emma to read and work, and used to converse with her in french, that she might understand the language ;

guage ; this, with now and then writing to my husband, Mr. Davis, and my cousin Emma, with whom I still maintained a correspondence ; though from the events that had passed it had been much interrupted, and even to her I did not enter into particulars of ills, which would have pained her to hear, and which I knew she could not remedy ; was the way in which I passed my time. Sunday was my holiday ; after church, if the weather would permit, I indulged myself in a walk with my children.

“ Six months thus rolled away. I had hitherto gleaned a scanty and precarious subsistence, for which I worked all hours, had deprived myself of proper rest and exercise ; yet I was content, and at times cheerful. At others, the remembrance of the past, when I was the object of admiration

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tion, when the young, the vain, and the giddy, all flocked around me, taking laws from my looks, and fashions from my manners, each eagerly striving to be noticed by me ; what a change ! Reflection told me, though I obtained by bitter experience the sentiments which now glowed in my heart, that I was at this time a far more useful member of society, than when, courted by the multitude, and the fashionable leader of amusements, I was the first in every gay assembly. Yet, such is human nature, so frail, so weak are our best feelings, that I often sighed after former comforts, comforts of which I now felt the deprivation. I tried, however, to check this repining spirit : I had chosen my own lot ; and therefore had no one but myself to blame for it.

“ At times, when, overcome with fatigue, or harassed by the events of the day, I have sat bewailing my destiny, lamenting my fate, and mentally upbraiding fortune for the hard lot I had drawn, I have felt I was doing wrong, and have prayed for fortitude, and patient submission. My prayers were heard; I thank the great author of all good, that I have acquired a state of mind, which raises me above all earthly dependence; and I can look forward with anxious solicitude, to that moment, which will for ever close my accounts with this world.

“ Summer coming on, work was very difficult to be obtained; I was frequently without any for a week or a fortnight together. It was not without great trouble that I could get a little plain work; and I was
often

often obliged to sit up half the night, to earn as much as would supply the morning's breakfast. At length even this resource failed. In this emergency I applied to my landlady, saying, that I knew not what to do for money, and begging her to endeavour to procure me work. She told me, she could raise money for me instantly. This was a joyful sound; I eagerly inquired how and where? but when she mentioned the means, my heart died within me. To apply to a pawnbroker, I knew not how to proceed: I tried to do without it; it was in vain; necessity breaks through all laws. My landlady acted for me in the business. I first sent my watch, then my jewels; by degrees all my valuables: in short, I was obliged to part with my clothes. Misery now made hasty strides; and sickness advanced the catastrophe.

“ The weight of my mind preyed upon a constitution already debilitated, and, in the form of a decline, gave every prospect of approaching death. Though the return of winter brought employment, yet I became so unwell, I could not fit to it. A constant pain in my side, short cough, and oppression on my chest, were the indications of approaching decay. My Mary was eighteen months old; I weaned her, hoping that by so doing, I might gather strength: for a short time I grew better, and returned to my occupation with double alacrity.

“ I wrote to Mr. Davis, telling him of my disorder. He answered me immediately, begging me to return to Llanbeder, assuring me, that air and goats' milk whey would soon recover me. To take a journey of that length was impossible. To quiet

his friendly anxiety, I wrote in my next, that I was much better; and described my situation as far more happy than it really was, and giving him hope, that the following summer I would comply with his invitation. When the body is enervated, the abilities are depressed and weakened; this was the case with myself; I was not by any means so successful this winter as the last. I was told my colours wanted warmth; there was no vivacity in them. No wonder, thought I; my mind is a stranger to vivacity, and what is there to impart warmth to my imagination? my painting, therefore, is but a type of myself. I will, however, strive to do better.

“ I had long been under extreme anxiety about captain Manley, from whom I had not heard for ten months; his last letters, containing only a few hasty lines, informing

ing me he was ordered to reinforce, with the troops under his command, the garrison at Port-au-Prince. Though packet succeeded packet, still I got no letters; I searched every newspaper with unwearied diligence; there were accounts of battles, and skirmishes, but the name of captain Manley was not to be seen. I sent to the war office, trusting, that thence I should obtain certain intelligence; there was no account of him; he had been among the missing in a late engagement, and it was generally supposed he had been taken prisoner, but no authentic account had been received. I could not, should this be the case, account for his silence, and augured from it nothing but misfortune.

“ Thus passed, or rather lingered, another four months, during which I experienced the most pinching necessity, frequently

quently wanting the common necessities of life. For many weeks, our chief subsistence was bread and potatoes, and if on the sunday we could have a bit of meat, it was regarded as an absolute luxury. To such a state of want was I at length reduced, that I should have regarded finding a shilling as a treasure. 'Oh!' said I, internally, as I have, with a breaking heart, paced the streets of this great city, 'to what a plenteous table are thousands of individuals now sitting down! even their servants are blessed with more plenty, than I again shall ever see! Good God!' I continued, 'who, to see me, would think I was the daughter of an earl? who, that regarded this shabby dress, or looked in this squalid and emaciated countenance, could suppose me allied to nobility? Oh! my cruel, cruel father, where are your feelings! that

that thus you condemn to absolute want your child and grand-children ! Surely your revenge is satiated, your anger softened ; you cannot always retain it. Did you but know, could you but see, to what we are reduced, would you withhold the common assistance humanity requires ? Despair, my father, almost leads me to you ; yet, to be again cursed ; to draw upon the unoffending heads of my innocent children the same bitter malediction, with which I am loaded, I cannot ; in spite of all my misery, all my want, I must not risk it.'

“ Distress of mind, added to the weakness of an already shattered constitution, so much impaired my health, that it was not without great difficulty I earned from half a guinea to twelve shillings a week ; out of which I had to pay eight shillings for my lodgings, and to subsist myself, and two children ;

children ; though my landlady humanely offered to take off two shillings a week from the rent of my apartments. At length having exhausted every means of supply, being without work, and seeing no prospect but that of actually dying for want, the dreadful idea of walking the streets for subsistence occurred to me. ‘What am I to do?’ said I. ‘What is to become of me? to see my children perishing for want; to hear their pitiful cries for bread, and to know, that I have none to give, no means to procure them any; surely, surely, if ever prostitution be excusable, it is in such a case! Oh, my children!’ said I, as I stedfastly regarded them, ‘to what a horrid alternative am I reduced! with what actions, and thoughts, does misery bring us acquainted! How has one wrong step plunged me into misery, from which I see
no

no prospect of extrication? And shall I, to preserve myself from one misfortune, rush into guilt and infamy? What can save me from the reproaches of my own heart? What can save me from the stings of conscience? Oh no, no! I continued, sinking on my knees: 'merciful Father! God of Heaven! give me strength to avoid temptation, and patience to endure misfortune! upon thee wholly I rely, to keep my steps in the paths of virtue; paths, which only insure peace and comfort.'

"In this dreadful moment I had recourse to prayer: I felt I had sinned; I doubted the mercies of my Maker, and was about to commit an action, years of repentance could not have obliterated. Yet let me not say I was about to commit it, for my heart and soul recoiled at the thought, and it was only the extreme of wretchedness, to which

I was

I was reduced, could bring so dreadful an idea to my mind. ' And am I to give myself up to infamy and vice, because I am in trouble? Am I to derogate from a conduct, which has hitherto insured me the approbation of my own heart, because it hath pleased the Almighty to afflict me? No, no, though steeped to the very lips in misery, never will I despair; never again shall the thought to do wrong have place in my mind. I took up a volume of Blair, which lay on the table, and opened it at these words, " endure, and thou shalt overcome."

" This sentence was as a balm to my heart; I read and re-read the passage over, till, gathering and feeling assurance from it, I ceased to despair, and became reconciled to my fate. In the evening my landlady
came

came and paid me four shillings and sixpence, which an acquaintance of her's had for some time owed me, for work I had done for her. I cannot describe what I felt as I took this trifling sum in my hand, or the conviction this relief afforded; conviction of the power and ability of the Omniscient, to relieve such as trusted in him. 'I do not deserve these mercies,' said I, laying the money upon the table: 'I doubted the goodness of my Creator, and was about to rush into vice, to preserve my children from want. O never, never, let me again doubt or despair! let the worst come, I will cheerfully submit.' My heart was overpowered by the emotions, with which it struggled; emotions it was too little to contain. I wept, but they were tears of gratitude; tears such as these gladden the
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the heart. My feelings are indescribable: surely I then had a foretaste of the eternity I shall shortly prove.

“ In two days after I had a visit from my good nurse, who had been at place in the country for three months past. To her I recapitulated all the events, that had passed in her absence; ‘let it,’ said I, ‘serve as a lesson to us never to despair.’ She appeared much struck both with my detail and appearance; she heard me with attention; then hastily rose to go, excusing herself, as having some particular business.

“ She returned in the evening, but with so altered a countenance, that she was all mirth and spirits, and was scarcely able to contain herself. At first I thought she had been drinking too freely, so much was she exhilarated. At length, sitting herself down, and smoothing her apron, she put her hand
into

into her pocket, and drew from it her handkerchief; then, untying a corner of it, dropped into her lap a number of guineas, which hastily gathering into her hand, she put into mine.

“For Heaven’s sake,” said I, “where did you get all this money? how came you by it? and why do you give it to me?”

“It is yours, it is yours,” replied the poor creature, almost frantic with joy.

“Mine!” said I, in the utmost astonishment, “it is impossible: be calm, I conjure you; tell me how you acquired this sum, and for what purpose you give it me.”

“I will tell you all,” she returned, “if you promise not to be offended with me for interfering in your affairs.”

“I will promise any thing, every thing,” I replied; “only be quick, and relieve me from the agitation I feel.” Indeed, my

heart

heart beat with unusual quickness ; I knew not what to think, or to whom I was obliged for such a sum. She then began :—

“ After you, madam, had informed me of the distressful situation, in which you for some time past have been, and the wretched step it had almost prompted you to take, the thought struck me, that I would go to the earl, and try whether, as if for an indifferent person, I could not obtain assistance from him. I hastened to St. James’s square, and easily procured admission. I boldly sent word to my lord, that, if he pleased, I should be glad to speak to him. He ordered me to come up. At first I was almost fearful of telling my errand ; but, upon his saying, ‘ Well, goody, in what can I serve you ? ’ I took courage, and said, I was come a begging. ‘ Not for yourself, surely, ’ said his lordship. I replied,

replied, 'No; but for a young person I had known in her better days.' I then told him, concealing the names, so much of your story as I thought necessary for him to know. He put his hand into his pocket, and gave me three guineas. Struck with his generosity, and thinking if he felt and did thus much for a stranger, how much more he would do, when he knew whom he was so essentially relieving, I fell upon my knees, and begged his lordship's pardon. I said, if he would forgive my boldness, I would tell him all the truth. He seemed very much amazed, and desired me to proceed. I then, madam, related all I knew of you and your concerns. I thought he was several times about to stop me, but yet seemed anxious to hear what I had farther to say.

“ After

“ After I had finished my account, he sternly asked me if you knew of my coming. I told him you did not. ‘ Woman,’ said his lordship, ‘ attempt not to deceive me.’ I assured him I did not. He then questioned me concerning the captain: he had heard he was gone abroad: was he still living? I said I believed he was; but you were under extreme anxiety on his account, not having heard from him for a length of time.

“ He then asked me about the children, and wanted to know how old your little boy was. When he heard he was dead, he appeared much hurt, but still kept questioning me. I replied as well as I could to all his questions: then, putting his hand into his pocket, he pulled out twenty guineas, and put them into my hand, saying, that it was to be considered as a gift for the little girls; that he had solemnly sworn never to

assist you, let your distresses be what they might; that he was not to be prevailed on to do any thing for you, and it was a resolution, to which he was resolved to adhere.

“ I was so thankful for what he had done, that I did not attend to any thing he said farther, and was just coming away, when he called me back, to ask me what I should have for the nursing of a poor man’s child: ‘ Do not,’ he very gravely said, ‘ overrate it, but tell what you would expect with a nurse-child.’ I replied, ‘ five shillings a week.’ ‘ That, then,’ he returned, ‘ I will pay weekly for each of the children: you may come or send every week for the money; but be careful never to mention the name of their mother; as I said before, any application on her account will be useless. He then told me to go to the house-keeper, and get some refreshment, but to be

be careful not to say a word of what had passed. I was, however, too anxious to come to you with the present to stop for any thing, so hastened back immediately.'

" Here my faithful friend ended her little narrative. Though grateful for this welcome and very unexpected supply, I was yet excessively distressed, to think my father was still so inexorable towards me. Surely, surely, I have expiated my fault, if tears, if penitence, if sufferings can expiate it. O could he read my heart; could he witness the sorrow with which it is loaded, it's remorse and grief for what is past, surely, surely, he would not withhold his pardon!

" I was, however, thankful and grateful, that he had done as much as he had for me: it opened to me a source of consolation, in knowing, that after my death my children

would at least be preserved from want, and I doubt not but when that event happens, he will still continue, if not extend, his kindness. But what could I say to the worthy woman, that had been the instrument of this consolation? I would fain have forced on her part of my riches, but this she steadfastly refused: I had then nothing but thanks to return, but they were the most grateful, that ever warmed a heart.

“ I now got back several things, with which I had been obliged to part. Among the rest, the pictures of my husband, and honoured, though disobeyed, father and mother, were most valuable: these I shall treasure to the last moment of existence.

“ I must now, as I have brought my unhappy story down to the present moment, speak in the present, and shall continue it
journal-

journalwise; or rather as incident offers, or matter strikes worthy of notice. Indeed, my health is so very indifferent, that I am unable to write much at a time.

“ *Monday.*—I have gotten an unexpected supply of work: it will last all the week. By letters I have this day received from Mr. Davis, I am much pressed to go down to Llanbeder. He offers to meet me fifty miles on my journey. If I do not get better in a month’s time, I will comply with his request, as I feel the necessity of trying some remedy for relief; and change of air may do wonders for me.

“ *Thursday.*—Nothing material has occurred. I am still fixed to visit Llanbeder, but must go by sea; a land journey would be too expensive. I must leave my children for a little time: I grieve to do so, as I am well assured I have but a very short

stay to make in this world. When shall I hear from my husband? Days, weeks, months roll on, and still I cannot obtain the least intelligence of him. What can be the reason? How ready is imagination to suppose the worst? But I must not dwell upon the idea.

“ *Tuesday.*—Nurse has been with me, and has agreed to take care of my darlings during my absence. Good God! should I never see them more! should the iron hand of death seize it's victim, before she can again reach London!—But I must not think of it; the great Father of mankind is all-sufficient; upon his Providence I rely.

“ A fortnight more has passed; still I scramble on, not materially worse, but no means better. To-morrow I embark for Llanbeder. Shall I never again be permitted to see my children? never
more

more hear their delightful prattle, or be soothed and comforted by their endearing caresses? Yes, I will still hope, that I shall be preserved to see them again. At four o'clock to-morrow I leave them, perhaps for ever. This is an idea, that, with all my philosophy, I cannot overcome: I will then seek in employment a relief from thought.

“ *Llanbeder, Aug. 4.*—“ The parting with my dear children affected me so much, that when I got on-board, I was obliged immediately to go to bed. We weighed anchor, and with a fair wind arrived off the place of our destination; but a breeze from the land setting in, we were in danger of being driven upon the rocks, which lie around the northern point of the town, and we were again obliged to put out to sea.

This unpleasant circumstance detained us a week, as it was all that time before we could again get into port.

“ I was met and conducted home by my worthy friend, whose joy to see me was unbounded, though he was evidently shocked at my looks. He has put me upon a milk diet, and I think I am already better. I have visited the grave of my darling, and feel a melancholy consolation in it.

“ *Aug. 16.*—Nurse has been very good. She has already written to me. My children are both well and happy. Just now mentioning my father's donation to them, Mr. Davis advises me to reside in Llanbeder. He says, we may support ourselves very well upon twelve or fourteen shillings a week. This is certainly a good plan, as my health, I have no doubt, will
amend,

amend, and I shall then be able to attend to their education; but I will not determine immediately.

“ *Sept. 1.*—Another month has rolled on. The pain of my side has returned: I am weaker, and not near so well as I was. Merciful Heaven, I thank thee, that my children still continue in health. Nurse writes me they are always asking for their mamma.

“ Letters from the West Indies this moment arrived. The final stroke has at length been struck, that will soon consign this fragile form to its last peaceful mansion. My husband is no more. This blow only was wanting to complete the sorrows I have known. I cannot write more; I cannot now command my pen.

“ This, then, is the termination of all my hopes and prospects; hopes, which
15 have

have enabled me to struggle with calamity; prospects, which, though distant, have relieved my saddened sight. They are all sunk, all buried in the cold bosom of the earth. It was upon this spot I parted with my poor Manley; it was upon this spot my foreboding heart presaged our parting was eternal:—fatal and true presentiment!

“ With caution and tenderness my kind friend broke this intelligence to me; but the letters I myself had received undid all his precautions. Yet I will strive even to outlive hope; I will endeavour to live for my children. Alas! how soon will they be really orphans! Desolate and unhappy creature, as I am, to which ever side I turn my eye, the prospect is dark and gloomy. Abandoned by my father, my husband no more, my children at a great distance from me, my health declining, my existence precarious,

carious, sickness and sorrow have humbled me to the dust. When shall I cast off this load of mortality? When will my soul be joined to the dear objects of its love? Surely this place is fatal to me! first my darling, my boy; now my husband! O death! when will thy insatiate appetite be satisfied? Never, till all things vanish.

“*Sept. 17.*—Mr. Davis says, I am now entitled to a pension: that, as my husband had a majority, it will, with my father’s allowance to my dear little girls, be sufficient to maintain us very genteelly. But it seems I must go and apply for it. I am lost to all concern about myself; I am indifferent to every thing; a total apathy has possession of me. I am very ill. I believe I shall not be long among the number of the pensioned; but I will go: I shall at least have the melancholy consolation of
1.6 breathing.

breathing my last sighs in the arms of my children; I shall then be once again with them. Ah! where is my apathy, where my insensibility, that this idea causes such a throbbing at my heart? I thought it was dead to pleasure or to pain. Fond flut-terer, thou convincest me I am yet mortal: oh be still! this emotion is too much for me.

“ To-morrow I again trust myself to the sea; to-morrow I am to take a last fare-wel of my excellent friend. Peace be with thee, then, oh most worthy, most disinte-rested of thy sex! Long mayest thou live to adorn society, and bless mankind; and when thy earthly race is run, mayest thou in Heaven reap a solid reward for all thy goodness while on earth!

“ This night I will once again indulge myself with a visit to the remains of my
child.

child. Soon, soon shall I join him. Delightful thought! pleasing, happy prospect! Let me enjoy it.

“ *Nov. 13.*—Again I am in London: once more, after trusting the deceitful ocean, have I held to my fond heart the darlings, in whom all my earthly wishes centre. This, a week ago, I little expected, when a watery grave seemed yawning to receive me. Treacherous element, whose smiling face and glassy surface contain such hidden terrors! Surely thou wert in unison with the gloomy feelings of my heart, that, by thy violent agitation, thou repliedst so responsively to the heavy sighs, that tear this wretched bosom! But let me be grateful; let me thankfully adore the mercies of the Omnipotent, that, preserving me from thy perils, has saved me to see and embrace my children.

“ *Nov.*

“ *Nov. 27.*—I continue very ill: spasms, and a violent oppression on my chest, almost overcome me. I would apply for advice, but I must not contract debts I cannot pay. Nurse will, I dare say, be able to find some remedy, that will in part relieve me.

“ *Nov. 30.*—What a proposal she has made, and yet how tenderly and fearfully she made it! To go to an hospital! my heart revolts at the thought. This is pride: and am I in a situation that will warrant it? No, no, let me conquer it. Have I not the best lesson of humility, the best pattern for submission, set me in Holy Writ? Does it not furnish me with the brightest examples? and shall I, a worm, a being, whose existence will be scarcely remembered beyond the day; shall I feel or encourage so despicable a vice?

“ *Dec.*

" *Dec. 3.*—I have been, and am accepted. Wednesday, then, I am to go in. Well, I will now close all my accounts with this world; I will write to my father, and then all worldly concerns are at an end. Yet, how shall I set about this arduous task? how shall I dare address him? But my duty demands it; I must, therefore, perform it.

" And now, O Creator and Preserver of mankind, receive my fleeting spirit, and pardon my erring soul. Enable me to support myself through the trying hour that is at hand. To thy watchful Providence and almighty power I commend my babes, in full assurance, that thou, 'who feedest the young ravens,' who art the support and protector of the widow and fatherless, will not desert them, but guide and protect them through the paths of life.

" Let

“ Let a lock of my hair be saved, and sent to lady Emma Delby, now marchioness de Tournois. Let her also have the reading of this manuscript: it will account for my silence on many subjects I should have communicated. Should my father wish it, he must have the first reading; but, above all, let it be put into the hands of my children, when they shall arrive at that dangerous age, in which the imagination carries away the judgment. From this memorial of my life, let them learn, that duty and obedience to parents and friends brings it's own reward, while a different conduct carries with it it's own punishment.”

“ *Lady*

*“ Lady Selina Manley, to the right honourable
the earl of Delmore.*

“ WITH a palpitating heart, and unsteady hand, do I presume to address a once fond, but now, alas, offended parent ! I well know, my lord, how little I ought to expect you will even deign to read this : but when it shall be delivered to you, the hand of death will for ever have closed eyes, which have incessantly wept for their fault ; and the heart of the writer can no longer throb with the anguish of repentance. Bitter have been my sorrows, and heavy my afflictions : sickness and distress have, in various shapes, assailed me ; and have at length brought me to an early tomb, and to that tomb shall I descend still lying under the heavy denunciations of
my

my father. Oh, my lord, let me conjure you by the affection you once had for your child, let not your anger extend beyond the grave ; look into that which is now preparing to receive me, and ere the last clod of earth be thrown over my remains, pronounce your forgiveness; so shall the mould press lighter on my bosom, and my soul with quicker flight ascend to that high Heaven, to which it hopes to be shortly conveyed. Be not more severe, O my temporal, than that supreme Judge, before whom I shall so soon have my audit. I have erred, but I can err no longer. My repentance has been long and heavy. In the gayest hours of life, in my apparently happiest moments, the memory of my father's displeasure has saddened all the festive scenes, with which I have been surrounded; I have inwardly sighed at
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the recollection of my undutiful conduct; and shall I dare, my lord, make a request to you? Is not the time past, in which a request of mine will be attended to? Believe me, my beloved, my honoured father, O permit me to call you by that revered name, that for myself I would not have ventured to make one, or scarcely attempt to address you; but there is another, a still dearer interest, which presses upon my sad heart, and calls for all it's exertions; it is that of two orphan children, who have not, when deprived of me, a protector in the world. Your kind support will keep them from absolute want; but your countenance will save them from contempt. O, my lord, I implore you not to be deaf to my petition, for, in the most humble sense of the word, it is one; on my knees I write this, knees which can hardly sustain
this

this tottering frame ; the power of extending your forgiveness to my own person cannot now be exerted, but in those of my children it may still be shown ; withhold it not, then, I conjure you. Alas ! I have but this hope to reconcile me to parting with them ; this hope in life clings to my heart in death ; it will smoothe the rugged pillow of that bed, which lies prepared for me.

“ I cannot, my lord, take a final leave of you even by letter. The emotions, which now agitate my heart, convince me, that every passion is not yet extinct. Pardon me, my lord, pardon me, my revered, my honoured father ; and do not deny this last, only request of the almost expiring

SELINA !”

The

The address to themselves drew tears from the eyes of the two orphans: as they proceeded, they were still more affected. They thought their grandfather a monster of barbarity, that could so unfeelingly discard his only child; and notwithstanding her repentance, maintain his anger against her. Of their father they felt ashamed; and, when they came to the account of his visit to the marquis of Monceath, and that nobleman's proposals, they laid down the paper; 'let us not seek a farther knowledge of our parent's faults,' said Emma. 'Well might Mr. Davis say, we might condemn, though not despise him; how is it possible to prevent it? In what a dreadful light does his character appear?'

Unable, however, to suppress their curiosity, they again took it up; and now
reading,

reading, now weeping, now commenting, they at length finished it.

The account of their mother's death, which was subjoined to it, quite overcame them; their hearts, ever alive to a tale of sensibility, were quite overpowered by this, in which themselves were so deeply interested.

The marquis of Monceath, from whom most of their parent's sorrows had originated, appeared to them a hideous monster of vice and depravity: they considered him as the object, that stimulated their father to the commission of acts, which his own better principles would have avoided; but who, infatuated by one leading vice, had, from that, been hurried into many. "Alas!" said Emma, "we cannot respect our father, we might almost be excused detesting him, for using so unworthily a woman of such virtue."

virtue and honour, as our mother: but since we cannot deny his follies, let us draw a veil over them, and remember how sincerely he repented them. Then, taught by his example, avoid giving way to any particular passion.

“ But of our mother, we may be proud,” replied Mary; “ one only action excepted, her life was a bright pattern of piety and resignation. Had we but seen this manuscript, before we went into Wales, with what different feelings should we have visited Tregwyllynd! as it is, it again presents every object fresh to my recollection.

“ Her sufferings,” answered Emma, “ were all in consequence of giving way to an ill placed affection:” here she sighed deeply. The fear, that her own was misplaced, rose in her mind, and she already began,

began, in idea, to anticipate the evils, that might ensue. The character of Mr. Davis, ever high in their esteem, now rose higher than ever. Nor was the tear of gratitude restrained, which flowed to the memory of the nurse; who, by her boldness, had procured their mother such essential relief; and who had been the humble means of placing them in the situation they now enjoyed. She had been dead some years, so that tears were the only return they could make.

Towards the end of the narrative, as their father's conduct amended, how did these truly good girls, with pious feeling, dwell on every circumstance, that served to exhibit it in better points of view. "Let us hope," said Emma, "his errors proceeded more from the head than the heart. As the mist of passion dispersed, they felt more

more reconciled to their grandfather; "for," said they, "has he not placed us in a respectable and even opulent situation? He might still farther have extended his resentment to our mother, by deserting her children, and leaving them exposed to poverty and misery; let us then, instead of condemning him, be grateful that he has so far noticed us, as to place us in the situation we enjoy."

"Above all," returned Emma, "let us learn, from the sufferings of our parents, the miseries attending on clandestine marriages, and underhand proceedings. How many young people rush into this error, under the idea, that paternal affection has but to see and forgive! By the sternness and unrelaxing severity of our grandfather, we are taught a very different lesson, who, rather than recede from a rash determination,

tion, had nearly seen his child perish for want even of the common necessaries of life."

To the memory of their mother they gave many tears ; and so much were they affected by the account of what she had suffered, that the reading her narrative had fixed a melancholy, and dejection of spirits on them, which, for many days, they could not shake off. Mrs. Ferguson, attributing it to the parting with Mr. Davis, did all in her power to dissipate it.

Emily was constantly proposing some party of pleasure, in which they were to engage. With a reluctance uncommon to young people, miss Stanley partook of these amusements. The reading of her mother's narrative had convinced her of their insufficiency, to procure happiness. A life of bustle and fatigue was by no means

means to her taste; she had too many intellectual resources, to fly to dissipation because she knew not better how to fill her time. Mary was considered by Mrs. Ferguson as much too young to be frequently seen in public. Emma, therefore, obtained that lady's permission, to remain at home with her sister.

The family, in which our heroine now resided, saw a great deal of company, and entered freely into the diversions London afforded. Mr. Ferguson loved his children almost to doating. It was that blind kind of affection, which prevented his denying them any amusement, they thought proper to partake; and Emily, who had a taste for what the world calls pleasure, entered with avidity into it's delights. Emma Stanley found, that, if she followed the same round, she should have no time

for occupations, that claimed a superiour attention, and of which she was fond. "If I hurry on in this manner," said she to Emily, as they were one day talking over the several parties in which they were engaged for the ensuing week, "my mornings will be all devoted to sleep and dress, and my evenings to pursuits of which I shall soon be weary; while for them I must give up many, in which I take delight. To read, write, take the pencil in hand, or even to think, are now, I believe, quite out of the system of a modern fine lady; and, as I do not wish to give up these privileges, and as neither my health nor fortune will admit my prosecuting your plans with propriety or comfort to myself, you must have the goodness to excuse my participating them. I know you will at first laugh at my odd notions, as you will call them; but

but custom will reconcile you to their strangeness, and you will leave me to their enjoyment."

In her heart Emily was not sorry, to hear this determination. The softness and gentleness of Emma Stanley's manners had already made apostates of two of her favourite beaux, and she secretly vowed, she would seize the first opportunity, that offered, of trying her power upon some of her friend's lovers.

George Ferguson had, unknown to Emma, asked his father's permission to address her. Though, in the article of family, they were in the dark, yet as they knew it was a noble one, to which their wards belonged, they gave a kind of ambiguous consent to their son's request. He now, therefore, commenced the professed lover of miss Stanley, who repeatedly denied him,

though he still persisted in his suit, Emily, who was his chief confidant, assuring him he was not indifferent to her friend. She could not forgive Emma for attracting her lovers, and not knowing any other way to be revenged on her, kindly adopted this; hoping that by so doing, she should prevent the attention of others. She knew, that George was an object of indifference to her, nay, almost of dislike; and she determined to revenge the affront her beauty had received, by thus disturbing her friend's peace. Miss Stanley, when she had so repeatedly denied young Ferguson, expected he would withdraw his pretensions, and no longer tease her with professions of a love she could not return: finding, however, that he did not, she resolved not to listen to him, but be deaf to all he said. If she wished to partake of
the

the amusement of a ball, she could not, because he would force himself on her for a partner. If they went to the play, or opera, he was sure to take his seat next to her; if they walked, he was at her side; in short, he haunted her every where; if she stayed at home, as was frequently the case, he declined joining the parties in which the family were engaged, and staid likewise: thus he broke through every plan she had formed for her own comfort. His vivacity, which before had pleased, now appeared levity and boldness; and she would not even give him credit for a good heart, "since," says she, "he delights in tormenting."

Thus things went on, till Christmas was past, when sir James and lady Mordaunt, with their daughters, returned to town. The morning after their arrival, miss

Stanleys received an invitation, to dine in Mortimer-street. This invitation was accepted with much pleasure on the part of the sisters; they hastened to meet their friends, who received them with unfeigned pleasure. Sir James, indeed, though glad to see them, yet wanted that cordial warmth, with which he had hitherto welcomed them.. The first news they heard was Howard's having been made a captain, and this promotion was shortly expected to be followed by the command of a ship. "My brother," said miss Mor-daunt, "has obtained this preferment entirely through merit; in a late action he signalized himself so much, by his coolness and intrepidity, that his captain wrote in such favourable terms to the admiralty of his conduct, that he was immediately noticed: to add to the pleasure this intelligence

gence gives, we expect shortly to see him; indeed, we do not know, whether he may not be in London in less than a fortnight."

When the ladies retired from table, miss Mordaunt conducted Emma to her dressing-room; and told her she was the person, for whom her brother had thus signalled himself. "I am," said she, taking a letter from her pocket-book, "my brother's correspondent and confidant; I saw his attachment to you while at Llanarth, rallied him upon it, and at length obtained his confidence. This letter," she continued, opening it, "like every other I have received, mentions you in almost every line. The hope, that my father will consent to his union with you, animates him in danger, and inspires him with courage. He expects you, as the reward of all his

toils; and one of the first steps he means to take on his return is, to solicit for James's permission to pay his addresses to you. To that permission I look forward with the greatest pleasure; for indeed I know of none I shall feel more sensibly, than that of seeing a brother I so much esteem, and who is really worthy of my affection, united to a woman so deserving as my Emma."

Emma was pleased and flattered by this discourse. To be thought on with affection by the family of the man she loved, was indeed a high gratification to her; yet something within told her, that the hope of being more than a friend to that family was vain. To miss Mordaunt, as to a real friend, she would have unbosomed herself, and told the fears, with which her heart was oppressed. "Ah!" said she mentally, "while only Emma Stanley, and under the

the care of guardians, I might act in conformity to the wishes of my heart ; but now that I am, though unowned, allied to nobility by the nearest ties of blood, I must endeavour to act so as to merit the approbation of my relations."

She longed to unfold the secret of her birth to her friend, but without assigning a reason why it had been hitherto kept concealed, she could not, as it would be the means of bringing both her father and mother into notice ; besides, the secrecy, to which she was enjoined, forbade the disclosure. She had often been anxious, to make inquiries concerning her grandfather, but she had hitherto moved in a circle, where she had little chance of obtaining the desired intelligence ; and the fear of raising impertinent curiosity had likewise prevented her.

The day Howard Mordaunt was expected home, his sisters invited miss Stanleys to meet him ; but Emma, conscious of her own weakness, and fearful of betraying herself, apologized, under pretence of an engagement, for staying at home. Still she entertained a hope, or rather expectation, that he would call in Bedford-row ; every rap at the door, every coach that stopped, put her spirits into such a flutter, that it was with difficulty she could disguise the agitation she underwent.

Breakfast next morning was not removed, when Mr. Mordaunt was announced ; Emma changed colour, but betrayed no other sign of emotion ; and disguising, as well as she could, the feelings of her heart, she received him gracefully and kindly.

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The prying eyes of Emily Ferguson, however, saw in this interview, that there was something to be concealed. The restraint so evident on the side of Mor-daunt, with the consciousness that overspread the face of Emma, left her no room to doubt; but anxious to satisfy her curiosity, she hastily drew Mary from the room, and did not let her rest, till she had obtained the intelligence of Howard's being very partial to Emma. Their departure left the lovers together, for Mrs. Ferguson was busied in affairs of the family.

And now Emma felt the awkwardness of her situation. She knew not what to say, or how to look. Howard, however, immediately availed himself of this favourable opportunity, to entertain her on the subject of his passion. She received his avowal with modesty and sweetness; she wished

wished rather to discourage than authorize his address; yet this wish militated so much against the real sentiments of her heart, that she sat silent, unknowing how to act. He then pressed her to allow him to speak to her friends. "Of my father's consent," said he, in all the sanguineness of hope, "I am in no doubt; he loves me too well, not to be happy at any event, that can promote my felicity; and with whom can I be so happy as with the lady before me, whose sweetness and understanding will make my whole life pass as a happy dream?" Emma bowed to his compliment; she too thought, that with the man before her she should know nothing but felicity. Yet knowing, that from her situation, she was not, conformably to her ideas of right, at liberty to marry for some years, she hesitated at granting his request. At length she said,

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“ I have no friends, Mr. Mordaunt, at least none by whom I am owned ; and till there is a prospect, that I shall be acknowledged, I cannot think of entering into yours, or any other family.”

“ No friends !” replied Howard, “ where is Mr. Davis ? where is Mr. Ferguson ?”

“ Alas ! sir,” she replied, sighing, “ they are but my guardians ; they might, I believe, give a consent, but there is still another, whose sanction I would wish to obtain, before I take a step of this nature, though so much unknown to me is he, that to his person I am a stranger ; and I know not where to apply to him.”—

“ What mystery is this ?” returned her lover ; “ for heaven’s sake, my dear Emma, unfold it ! relieve me from this state of suspense !”

“ I wish

“ I wish I could,” said Emma, “ but at present I am not empowered to do so. And how are you sure, should I be tempted to act as if this person were not living, that you are secure of Sir James’s approbation ?”

“ How am I sure !” replied Howard, with a look of surprise, “ wherefore that doubt ? Has any thing occurred during my absence, to make you think the contrary ?”

“ No,” she hesitatingly replied, “ but since your family have returned to London, I have thought, it may be only imagination, that Sir James has received me with coolness.”

“ Dear Emma,” replied Howard, “ it is nothing else : be assured, my father respects and esteems you ; my mother thinks more highly of you than of any woman breathing ; and for my sisters, they love you

as I ”

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as if you were already their own. Why, then, do you encourage a doubt of the kind? No, were I not assured they would receive you with as much rapture as myself, I would not solicit you to become a part of the family: permit me, however, to make the trial; if it fail, I will press you no farther on the subject. If it succeed, surely the friend or relation, whose approbation you are so anxious to obtain, cannot withhold it, when he sees you married to the man of your choice, happy in his constant and unremitting endeavours to make you so; and beloved and honoured by his family, which is both ancient and respectable. But supposing the worst; should he be displeased with your uniting yourself to the happy object of your affections, ask yourself, has he any right to be so? Certainly not. Does he not, by your own account,

count, discard you? And are you to pass your whole life in joyless singleness, because you are fearful of offending him? No, believe me he is entitled to no duty or forbearance on your part. Did he step forward to load you with favours, and stand in the light of your protector; then, I grant, you ought to refer to him for approbation of your choice."—

"Stop, Howard," said Emma, "he has, though unknown, been the friend you describe; he has placed me in the situation in which you see me: without his kindness very, very different would it have been; upon that account, therefore, he is entitled at least to my endeavour to please. I am yet very young, and you," she added, smiling, "not much older; wait a year or two, perhaps in that time circumstances may alter; should they not, and

and your father consents to our union, I will, when I am of age, become yours. Till then, see me but as a friend; a thousand things may happen during that interval. You may see some one you like better, who in every respect may be a more suitable match for you. Your chance for happiness too will be greater, than with a woman situated as I am. Wherever there is mystery, there can be no real felicity. Without I broke my word, I could not help being mysterious. Upon all accounts, then, it is best, that we see each other but as friends: as one of my most sincere and respected friends I shall ever esteem you; for the present, then, think of me, I beseech you, in no other light."

Howard endeavoured, but in vain, to combat her arguments. Convinced she was acting right, nothing could shake her resolution:

resolution : till at length, finding she was unalterable, he was obliged to content himself with her promise, to be his when she was of age.

Mary and Emily, now returning to the parlour, put an end to their conversation; and Mordaunt shortly after took leave, but not before Emily had taken a survey of his form and face, which both corresponded exactly with her ideas of masculine beauty. She no longer wondered at Emma's indifference to her brother; she saw whence it originated, and resolved to make the love both of Howard and her brother subservient to her own views. For this purpose, the moment George returned she flew to him, and informed him who had been to visit miss Stanleys: then painted the reception Emma had given to Mordaunt in such glowing colours, that all the jealousy of George's disposition was roused.

Finding,

Finding, from what he said, that she had gone too far, she artfully softened the account, and tried to convince him, that Emma's conduct was the consequence of a spirit of coquetry, which she had frequently observed in her; then, persuading him still to persevere in his attention to Emma, she assured him she would herself keep such a watchful eye over her, and plan such schemes, as should bring about the conclusion he wished.

George was too much of a lover, not to catch at the smallest twig of hope. He therefore promised his steady adherence to her advice. But Emily Ferguson had other schemes in her head—schemes with which she dared not trust him. She considered, therefore, if she could turn the channel of Howard's love from Emma to herself, she should not only gratify the
revenge

revenge she felt against her for robbing her of her lover, but open a chance of success for her brother. Her next plan then was to persuade her mother, to pay a visit in Mortimer-street, that they might thus become acquainted with the female part of the family. Mrs. Ferguson, out of compliment to her wards, readily consented: the families became mutually pleased with each other; and miss Stanley saw with pleasure an intimacy take place.

Howard was constantly at Bedford-row, where the elegance of his manners always procured him a welcome reception. His love for Emma, instead of being confined within the bounds of friendship, increased almost to adoration, as the justness of her sentiments, the domestic turn of her disposition, and the goodness of her heart and

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understanding displayed themselves. Emily saw this increasing affection, with a sorrow that almost amounted to despair. In vain she tried all the arts of coquetry, and allurements of beauty, to draw his attention from Emma to herself. She was, undoubtedly, a fine and beautiful woman, and it was impossible to regard her without admiration; but in the breast of Howard Mordaunt that was the only sentiment she excited. He saw beneath her apparent openness much art and design; and he considered the professions of friendship which, in his presence, she was constantly making to Emma, as designed to veil some purpose she had to answer.

Finding all her arts ineffectual, she resolved to attempt dividing the lovers, by raising the jealousy of each; this scheme she manœuvred so well, that she soon had the satisfaction of seeing

seeing it's progress. The insinuations, that she was constantly throwing out, when she happened to be alone with Howard, of the attachment which she pretended Emma felt for her brother, first alarmed his jealousy : and one morning accidentally coming into the room, he found George Ferguson alone with her, leaning over her chair, as she sat drawing at the table, in an attitude of admiration.

During the course of this visit, two or three flighty speeches, addressed to Emma, incensed Howard so much, that he could hardly disguise his feelings. There had ever been a degree of reserve betwixt the young men, a reserve which sprung from jealousy, each considering the other as his rival. Emma, though she disliked the attention of George, could not but be civil to him, as the son of her guardian, and his

lady, who were kindness itself. She could not but behave respectfully to him; besides, being inmates of the same house, there was a degree of freedom naturally used between them, that to a jealous mind might seem particular; but it was the freedom of a sister to a brother.

Howard saw this, and attributed it to other motives. He recollected the pleasure, with which she had received him at Llanarth; a thousand other circumstances crowded on his mind, and told him, this was the reason why she would not suffer him to apply to her father. Thus he felt all the tortures of jealousy; he now saw every look and action of his mistress with a jaundiced eye; and, construing every sentence that escaped her according to the suggestions of that passion, which had gained such full possession of him,

became miserable and dejected. He received her address with coldness, and returned short, nay almost uncivil answers to her questions. His countenance, unable to conceal, betrayed the agitation of his heart; so rapid was the progress of this enemy to repose, that it was impossible to escape the eye of the spectator.

For a while Emma sat thunderstruck at the alteration she observed in him. She knew not to what to attribute it; she investigated her own conduct; she knew of no action in it, that could occasion this alteration in his behaviour; she was free from even the thought of giving intentional offence. To give pain to Howard Mordaunt was the last idea she could entertain. In her turn, then, she felt offended, and hurt at this proof of the uncertainty of his disposition.

disposition. She thought, had they married, how much the appearance of displeasure on his brow, and the averted and gloomy look of his countenance would have distressed her.

Emily Ferguson now came in. She, who had more cunning, perceived in an instant whence his emotion sprang. She saw, that her plan had already taken effect, and that jealousy was the leading trait of his temper. This seemed the moment to begin her operations, and she resolved not to lose it; she again played off all her arts, which were not, as before, unsuccessful; for Howard, angry with Emma, now paid some attentions to her rival. Emily gave such encouragement to them, that it began to attract the notice of miss Stanley; she felt it sensibly, was acutely pained at Howard's behaviour, and despised Emily for encour-
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raging

raging it: "and this," said she, mentally, "is among the first proofs of his unabated love, that he takes the earliest opportunity of being offended, I know not why; and to convince me still more of the uncertainty, or rather lightness of his attachment, flirts and coquets with the first woman he meets. But he shall not be witness how much I am hurt at these proofs of his insincerity: if I show any resentment for it, it will gratify them too much: no, no, I too will assume the appearance of the indifference he feels." She did so, even though her heart was wrung by this supposed fickleness of her lover.

This farce was carried on for some weeks, every day of which Howard was in Bedford-row. None of the party were truly pleased but Emily: her self-love and vanity blinded her so effectually, that she
could

could not see things in their true light, or bring herself to think, that she owed his attentions to pique against her rival; but flattering herself, that he was now become her convert, gave herself up to all the pleasure the idea inspired; and the pleasing hopes of the day were renewed in the visions of the night. On the contrary, poor Emma felt all her sorrow renewed upon her pillow. To think, that the man, in whom all her hopes of happiness centred, could for a moment prove unfaithful, filled her with grief; and she gave way to the pangs, that jealousy had already inflicted on her heart. Her sleep, thus broken by so unwelcome an intruder, was unrefreshing and unsalutary; she rose out of spirits, displeased with herself, and all about her; to George she could scarcely be civil, and still less to Emily, whom she regarded as

the object, that had drawn her lover from her.

Mordaunt came in one morning soon after breakfast : Emily received him with rapture, Emma with coldness : she could not forgive his past conduct, and she was too artless to disguise her displeasure. In the course of conversation, Emily mentioned a party having been formed for the play that evening, and asked Emma to accompany them : upon her refusal, she artfully hinted the mortification and disappointment her brother would feel, “ who goes, Emma,” said she, “ entirely upon your account ; but you know,” she continued, “ your power over him, and I am sure he will be as happy, if not more so, in enjoying an evening *tête a tête* with you ; nor do I suppose, that it will be very dissonant to the wishes of my friend.”

Emma

Emma reddened with anger; but before she could reply, Howard prevented her by saying, "Mr. Ferguson could not fail of being happy, when a lady gave up her amusement for the pleasure of passing a confidential evening with him; and he dared to say, would think so, and feel his time much better spent, than it could be in a play-house. But Emily," and he turned to her: "as lovers generally think the company of a third person not only troublesome, but disagreeable, we will not incur this imputation; therefore, if you will accept of my escort, instead of your brother's, I will, with great pleasure, be your attendant."

This was exactly what Emily wished; and, with a look of exultation at Emma, she agreed to the proposal. Emma saw, and felt, what this look was meant to

convey. "You are both extremely considerate," she haughtily and contemptuously replied; "receive my thanks for this attention to my happiness, which I shall endeavour to return, by profiting by your hint, and leaving lovers together." Every feature of Emma Stanley's face spoke the sentiments, that were uppermost in her mind; scorn for the treatment she had received, and contempt for the meanness, that had induced Emily, to make use of falsehood, to carry her point.

Determined, however, not to be witness of Emily's triumph, and to convince Howard, that she meant not to be alone with George, she told Mrs. Ferguson, that she would, if not disagreeable to her, spend the day with some ladies she had formerly known at school, and with whom she still preserved an acquaintance. To this Mrs. Ferguson making

no objection, she sent for a coach, and, taking her sister with her, departed.

Howard was to come early, that they might get to the house, which was expected to be very full, in good time, as they feared they should find some difficulty in getting to their box. Both Howard Mordaunt and George Ferguson were surprised at not meeting miss Stanleys at dinner, and more when they learned, that they had gone out for the day. Howard thought it did not look much like wishing to pass the evening *tête a tête* with a lover; he feared he had judged wrongfully, blamed the hastiness of his own disposition, and thought of apologizing for it. Never had he seen Emily in such spirits as she was this evening; her witty, though sarcastic remarks, drew smiles from every body; and were,

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while

while only general observations, received with pleasure.

Her mother, during tea, regretted the absence of miss Stanleys, adding, she wished they had been of their party.

“I am sure,” replied Emily, “we are better without them; Mary, indeed, is supportable, but Emma is so grave and conceited, that she is a perfect antidote to mirth, or even cheerfulness.”

Howard saw the malignity of her mind in her speech, and despised her for it; but made no reply to her remark. But Mrs. Ferguson, with whom Emma was a particular favourite, warmly espoused her cause, and painted her conduct in the most flattering colours. This drew some sarcastic observations from Emily. Mrs. Ferguson sharply reproved her daughter for indulging

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ing herself in such freedom of speech; and concluded by saying, "had you, Emily, as much good humour, and real generosity, as the lady you have endeavoured to depreciate, you would not have laid yourself open to the reproofs you have incurred, or subjected yourself to the censures you deserve. Let this be a lesson to you, that she who strives to lessen the merit of the absent in the eyes of the world, draws upon her own head the reproach, she has endeavoured to affix on her neighbour. Miss Stanley has at least one merit; she is never heard to speak ill of any one. If she cannot say any thing favourable, she is silent. By this conduct she is loved and respected, and I sincerely wish, my dear Emily, that, with all the faults you pretend to ascribe to her, you were her exact counterpart; believe me, I should be well satisfied, were

you neither better nor worse, than her you have so shamefully scandalized."

Emily felt hurt and confounded at this unexpected reproof, so publicly given, and could hardly refrain from tears, to which she was ashamed to give way: she sat, therefore, in a fullen kind of silence, twisting a ring she wore round and round on her finger. The manner, in which Mrs. Ferguson spoke, struck the whole of the company present, and they could not for some minutes recover their surprize, till Mr. Ferguson, grieved to see his daughter thus vexed, turned the thoughts of the party to another channel, by asking some indifferent question.

The conversation soon became general, and the past seemed totally forgotten. But on Howard it had made an indelible impression. The conduct of Emma,
which

which, had received such malignant observation from Emily, had been as highly commended by her mother, who was a woman of discrimination and sound judgment. This dwelt upon his mind. His thoughts became so abstracted, that Emily, who had expected the greatest pleasure in his company, felt herself highly disappointed. She was obliged to address him three or four times, before she could command his attention, which even then she could not fix: his thoughts were too much employed, to be diverted to any other channel, and Emily again had the mortification of finding herself neglected.

The friends, with whom miss Stanleys had dined, had also made a party for the play. With great persuasion they had induced their young friends to join it, which, as they had refused Mrs. Ferguson, they
felt

felt unwilling to do, till, unable to resist their entreaties, they trusted to Mrs. Ferguson's kindness for forgiveness, and accompanied them.

The first act was nearly finished, when they entered their box. The largeness of their party, and the bustle they made at entering, drew the eyes of the house upon them: but who can speak the surprize both of Howard and Emily, when they saw miss Stanleys? If anything were wanting, to complete the mortification Emily had endured that night, or more thoroughly awaken the jealousy of Mordaunt, it was the praises bestowed by the gentlemen on the beauty of Emma; and to witness the extreme attention she received from those of her party.

Emma was no sooner seated, than her eyes were mechanically turned in search
of

of those objects in which she was most interested. She was not long in distinguishing the party from Bedford-row. Howard was sitting by the side of Emily, and at that moment in deep discourse with her, she smiling and looking pleased. The gentleman who sat next now addressing her, drew her attention from them. When she looked again, Mordaunt was sitting in an attitude of thoughtfulness, and appeared unconscious of what was passing before him. At that instant her eyes met those of Emily, who bowed with an air of exultation. Her motion attracted Howard's, whose eyes were directed to that part of the house, to which her bow had been addressed.

The eyes of Howard and Emma met, each expressive of different sentiments. Mordaunt felt sorry at having offended her

her by a groundless jealousy. On the contrary, Emma was more than ever offended: she could not forgive his suspicions of George Fergusson, or his so readily agreeing, to afford him an opportunity of being alone with her. It was an affront to the affection she had confessed for him, and she determined to show her resentment of it. Though, above all women, disliking the little arts of coquetry, she yet condescended to listen with an appearance of attention to a gentleman, who was entertaining her with numberless compliments. The frequent smiles, the look of animation and satisfaction, with which she honoured him, were not unseen by Howard. The pardon he so lately determined to solicit, he was now above asking: he cursed the whole sex, and inwardly swore never to be the dupe of any woman.

Roused.

Roused by this sight from the pensive mood, with which he had entered the house, he renewed his attentions to Emily, to whom they were always acceptable. But while Howard and Emma were thus studiously tormenting themselves, and each other, accident effected a reconciliation. In the middle of the third act one of the managers came forward, and informed the audience, that a fire had broken out next door to the theatre, and therefore it might be prudent for the company to leave the house, though they need not be alarmed, as there was no immediate danger, if they would retire coolly, and without precipitation.

The sound of fire was felt like a shock of electricity. In an instant all was surprise and horror: screaming, fainting, and swearing, were all heard and seen together. Every one endeavoured to gain

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the entrance, which the crowding and clamour prevented. Emily Ferguson gave a shriek, and begged to be taken home. "Oh! take me out, take me out, Mr. Mordaunt," she vociferated; "I shall be burnt to death!" Howard took her in his arms to do so; but, casting his eyes round the house, they were caught by the sight of Emma supporting her sister, who was fainting in her arms. Forgetful of every thing else, he gave Emily in charge to her brother, and immediately left the box. He endeavoured to get round to the side of the house, where Emma sat. The attempt was impracticable; every avenue, every passage, was thronged; nothing was heard but the shrieks of women, and vociferation of men. To argue was vain; to get through the crowd impossible. He returned to the box. His eyes were again rivetted upon Emma. Her sister had

had fainted, and some gentlemen were relieving Emma from her burden.

Mary's situation demanded the assistance of more than one; and her sister, having committed her to the care of the gentlemen, endeavoured to follow them; but at sight of the crowd, which were pressing through the lobbies, she hung back, fearful of the attempt. Her sister had been carried farther than she could see. Alarmed, lest she should come to any hurt, and grown fearless of herself, she rushed forward, and, mixing with the crowd, was nearly pressed to death by it.

Howard no sooner saw, that Mary had fainted, and found all attempts to get round to them ineffectual, than he leaped into the pit, and, in spite of opposition, forced his way to the opposite boxes, which he clambered up, where missing those, whose assistance

ance he had in view, he went forward to the lobby. Here he presently discerned Emma, who, pressed by the crowd, which now poured upon her from every quarter, was unable any longer to support herself through it. Howard saw her just sinking. Endowed in a moment with the strength of a Hercules, he bore down all opposition, and rushed to her support. Never was aid more effectual: he clasped her in his arms, and with great difficulty made his way to the door.

Escaped from the theatre, every threatened danger seemed over. But he found his lovely charge had lost all knowledge of her situation. She had fainted in his arms. He bore her, however, to a neighbouring house, where he stopped but to see her in safety, and again returned to the theatre, in hopes of being serviceable to her sister, whom

whom he had passed at the door, still in a senseless state. He waited, and watched every person that passed. Mary was not to be seen. He went to every house, every place he could think of: she was not to be found, or the least intelligence of her obtained; there were so many ladies in a similar situation, that she could not be particularized by it.

He returned to Emma, whom he found recovered. Her first question was for her sister, conjuring some one to go to her relief. Mordaunt entered. Forgetful of every past resentment, solicitous only for her sister, and thankful for his past assistance, she flew to him. "Dear Mr. Mordaunt, where is Mary? Have you brought her to me?" Howard told her how unsuccessful he had been. "Let us both go," said Emma, "let us both go in search of her. Oh good God!

God! where is my sister? where can she be?" She sunk down in a chair, overcome by the idea, that Mary had perished. "We will go home, my dear Emma," returned Howard; "I have no doubt, but we shall there meet her."

Emma's anxiety for her sister now surmounted every consideration for herself; and though scarcely able to stand, she yet insisted upon going in search of Mary. Howard tried every means, and used all the arguments he was master of, to quiet her fears. A coach being obtained, he lifted her, more dead than alive, into it. Here, unable to resist the opportunity that offered, softened by the distress in which he saw her, and in spite of all the resolutions he had formed to the contrary, he implored her pardon for the past; intreated, that she would again receive him into fa-

vour, and impute his conduct to it's real source, the extreme love he felt for her, which made him jealous of the slightest favour shown to another. She listened mechanically to him, for her thoughts were so much engaged for her sister's safety, that even this theme, so delightful to her ears, scarcely interested her. It was impossible, however, for her to remain long insensible or inattentive. The earnest entreaties of Howard, the service he had rendered her, the real love she bore him, were all together pleas she could not resist; and he not only obtained her pardon, but assurances of returning love. He was delighted at her gentleness, and, engaged in a conversation, in which his heart took such sensible part, regretted every step the horses took, as bringing him nearer it's conclusion.

By

By the direction of Howard, the coachman had driven to Queen Ann-street, to the friend's with whom miss Stanley had dined, supposing Mary had been carried thither. When they arrived, and the object of their search was not to be found, the terrour and agitation of Emma were inconceivable : she had caught at the hope, that she should there meet her sister, and had gone in full expectation of taking her up. Mr. Winter informed her, he had sent to Bedford-row, to inquire after them, and that his servant would be back presently ; then begged them to alight, and wait, at least, till he returned. " No, no," said Emma, " I will go on : let me go to my guardian's. Good coachman, drive on ; drive as fast as you can ; do not let us stop. Dear Howard,

Howard, let us be gone." Mr. Winter, finding her alarm for her sister, ceased to press her, but contented himself with saying, the servant would be back presently, and if she would but wait till he returned, she might obtain earlier intelligence, than she now possibly could. Emma, however, thought otherwise: her fears outstripped every consideration, and they had now arisen so high, that she was sensible only of the wish to get to her guardians. Howard urged every thing, that friendship or love could suggest, to calm her spirits. The attempt was fruitless; her fears predominated, and all was insufficient to calm them.

Arrived at Bedford-row, she hastily jumped out of the coach, and ran up stairs. Except Mrs. Ferguson, none of the party had returned. Mr. Ferguson was gone in

search of his daughte: Mr. George had not been at home. "And who is gone for my sister?" said Emma, frantically. "Good God! where is she, where can she be? Go, go, dear Howard: fly! try to save her! O merciful Heaven! perhaps she is crushed to death! What will become of me without her?"

Mrs. Ferguson, who herself was almost in a state of insensibility, tried, together with Mordaunt, to compose her. She had worked herself up to a degree of agitation indescribable. Her lover was unwilling, to leave her in this state; but, until she could see or hear of Mary, he was convinced nothing could calm her emotion. He, therefore, again set out in quest of her sister.

For a long while the search of Howard was unsuccessful, and he was almost hopeless,

less, when, passing an apothecary's shop, near Exeter Change, which was still open, he thought he would at least inquire. He was here informed, that a young lady had been brought in by two gentlemen, who waited till she was in some degree recovered, and, having learned her address, were gone to acquaint her friends. The man said, it was evident the lady was very much hurt; for the gentleman, that supported her, had been jammed in by the door, and with all his skill could not extricate either her or himself. Howard requested to see her. He did, and found it was Mary. She was on a sofa, supported in the arms of a lady, who was wiping the dews from her face, which successive faintings had occasioned. She was pale and languid; one of her arms hung down over the sofa; her head-dress was intirely torn off,

off, and her hair hung in wild confusion over her shoulders. She looked the picture of distress and terrour.

Her surprise and joy were manifest at the sight of Howard. She anxiously inquired for her sister, and expressed great solicitude to be with her. She complained of violent pain both in her arm and side. The former Howard judged, from it's appearance, was broken; but was fearful of declaring his thoughts. He would immediately have conveyed her home; but the gentleman of the house coming in, and hearing her complaints, pronounced her arm broken, and was not long before he found, that two of her ribs had been fractured also. He would fain have had her remain where she was, and would also have sent for a surgeon; but Mary's extreme earnestness, to be conveyed to her sister, could

could not, from motives of safety to herself, be overcome.

Howard, finding persuasion ineffectual, now pressed Mr. Lake to accompany them, and to place the arm in such a situation, as should be least painful. Against his better judgment he complied. She was with great difficulty lifted into the coach, which was ordered to drive as slowly as possible. The motion was, however, almost too much for her; it was not without great trouble, that they kept her from fainting.

As they advanced towards the house, Howard thought he had better go first, and prepare the family for the sight of Mary. He did so. The whole party, except Mr. Ferguson, who had set off, according to the gentlemen's directions, to fetch the poor sufferer, were now assembled.

bled. Emma, hearing his voice, ran to meet him, asking for her sister. He took her hands, and led her back to the drawing-room. "She is coming, my dear Emma; but be composed; she is a little hurt, but will be with you immediately." "O good God!" she replied, anticipating the worst, "she is dead! The gentleman, that saved her, said how very bad she was. Speak, tell me, is she alive, or will she be brought in a corpse?" "She has certainly suffered very much," returned Howard; "but she is alive, and I trust will be long preserved to you."

By this time the coach drew up to the door, and Howard went to assist Mary. Her sister, too, trembling with fear and agitation, followed: but when she saw the state in which she was, all her fortitude forsook

forsook her ; she leaned upon the bannisters, and groaned aloud. Thus, unable to assist, she followed in silent anguish.

The exertion had been too much for the poor sufferer : she fainted, from the pain it occasioned. The moment she recovered, her eyes were fixed on her sister, and, endeavouring to move her mutilated arm, she tried to embrace her. The tears, which were flowing down the cheeks of Emma, caught her attention : she essayed to speak, but was unable, and, putting her hand to her side, seemed to say that prevented her.

Emma was scarcely seated in the drawing-room, when the surgeon, who had been sent for, arrived. The anxiety depicted upon every face, and the fear they entertained, lest some internal injury had been sustained, made them dread to hear his opinion.

Their hopes revived, when he declared, that there was no cause of fear, in that respect, though two of her ribs were fractured. A bandage being applied to these, and the proper applications to the arm, which was swelled to such a degree, as not to admit of being reduced at present, she was put to bed, and ordered to be kept as quiet as possible.

The confusion, this melancholy circumstance had occasioned, so fully occupied the attention of every one, that none had time to think of themselves. The bustle however, was no sooner over, than their ideas reverted to their former channel. Howard was all joy, that he had made his peace with Emma. Emily was mortified at his conduct. She could not forgive him, for leaving her, to assist her rival: but her mortification

mortification was sensibly increased, when she found, that a reconciliation had taken place betwixt them. Emma, while she sat by the bed-side of her sister, which she never quitted through the night, had ample time for thought. She reproached herself for so easily forgiving Mordaunt: "Do I not convince him," said she, mentally, "how great his power is over me? Will he not think he has but to offend, and be forgiven? Where is my firmness? where is my pride? Surely every nobler passion is sunk in this hateful one. And yet did he not risk his own life, to preserve mine? But for him, I, perhaps, had not now been here; or, like my dear Mary, might have been brought home a cripple. Did he not, too, bring her to me, and, by his tenderness and care, procure immediate assistance for her? Generous, noble Howard!

can I withhold a poor forgiveness to you, who have so gallantly purchased it? O no! dearer than ever to my heart, I live but in the hope of being one day yours."

Her thoughts again reverted to Emily, and again she felt all the torments of jealousy. She imputed to compassion what had been the impulse of affection. "I will still be reserved," said she; "I will not let him see I can so easily overlook the conduct that has past: no; before I confirm his pardon, I will judge, by his conduct to Emily, whether he be worthy of it."

Thus passed the night. Mary had lain more quietly, than could be expected, and had little or no fever. This was the most favourable symptom, that could appear. When the surgeon arrived, he pronounced her far better, than he expected to find her; and gave them hopes, that the fracture in
her

her arm might be reduced, in the course of a few days. Every thing, he said, depended on her being kept quiet, and strictly enjoined them, not to admit any company to her.

Mrs. Ferguson would fain have relieved Emma from her attendance; but she was too tenderly attached to her sister, to quit her for a moment, and, except to miss Mordaunts, was invisible to every one. These ladies came the moment their brother informed them of the accident, and sat with Emma a considerable time. Miss Mordaunts, finding Emma was resolved to devote her whole time to her sister, and that she watched by her all night, begged she would allow her to sit up with her. With great reluctance the other consented, and, not without much persuasion, was induced to comply with her request. How

did the character of each rise upon the other! The tenderness of Emma to her sister was scarcely superiour to that shown to her by miss Mordaunt; and the night passed away in all the sweets of mutual confidence and friendship. Howard, ever the subject of his sister's discourse, was the theme they chose, a theme the most grateful to the heart of Emma; yet she avoided giving encouragement to it; for, though she entertained the highest opinion of her companion's prudence, she so well knew her extreme fondness for her brother, that, to gratify him, she knew she would repeat all that might be said. Thus, though she avoided saying or talking much of him herself, she was solicitous to hear every thing respecting him, for whom she was so much interested.

Miss

Miss Mordaunt joined with Mrs. Ferguson in begging Emma to take rest. In this request Mary earnestly and importunately joined. But Emma was inflexible: to leave her sister, even for a few moments, would, in her opinion, have been a crime; she would not, therefore, give up, but still maintained her post.

Howard Mordaunt, who came every day to make his inquiries, now intreated of Emma to spare herself. He saw she was sinking under her fatigue; and the paleness of her countenance, and heaviness of her eyes, showed how much she suffered by it. Emily Ferguson saw, with a regret amounting to despair, how much Emma was endeared to Mordaunt: every circumstance told her, that Emma was now with double sway holding her empire in his heart. Emily fancied he was necessary to her happiness,

happiness, and resolved to strike a bold stroke for the attainment of her wish. There was no longer any possibility of raising Howard's jealousy in regard to George; for he, having been more than usually importunate, did not choose to receive the denials Emma so repeatedly gave him. To ease herself from the pain she felt at his addresses, she had spoken both to Mr. and Mrs. Ferguson, who had pledged their words, that he should be no farther troublesome to her. That they might keep their promise with Emma, and in the hope, that absence might effect a change in their son's inclination, they sent him to Bristol, till Mary should get well: then, if he continued his persecutions of Emma, they determined to place their wards in some eligible family, at a distance from his visits.

George

George was actually gone, and Emily commenced her operations by assuming a languor and dejection of spirits. At the sight of Howard a faint smile would illuminate her face for a moment; then, again relapsing into dejection, she would draw forth heavy sighs, which she took care should be heard by every one present.

The day on which Mary's arm was to be set, every one of the family were with her, endeavouring to comfort her, and raise her spirits. In the interim Howard came in. His friendly attention and solicitude had endeared him to every part of the family so much, that he was regarded almost as one of it's members, and visited in it just when he pleased. The moment he was announced, Emily left the room, and did not return to it again.

It

It was gratifying to see with what affection Emma attended on her sister, and to observe how Mary drew comfort from her eye. During the time the surgeon was employed in reducing the fracture, Mary had one arm round her sister's waist, who, with hers, supported her head, and with the other hand kept wiping away the cold dew, that fell from the face of the poor sufferer. As her arm was pulled, the tears, that blinded the eyes of Emma, almost made her insensible to the pitiful expression of Mary's pale countenance. Mrs. Ferguson stood before them with a bottle of salts, which she kept constantly applying to the nose of the poor invalid, whose fainting was every moment to be dreaded. The groans she gave, which in vain she tried to suppress, were answered responsively by her sister,

sister, who felt them with more than common sympathy.

At length the operation was performed, and Mary was again put into bed; where, tired with the pain and fatigue she had undergone, she soon fell asleep. Emma, also, exhausted by supporting her sister, was persuaded by Mrs. Ferguson, to leave her to the care of her nurses, and take some refreshment. For this purpose she went into the drawing-room, where she was surprised at not seeing Emily, whom she had supposed to be with Mordaunt. It was rather an uncommon circumstance, that Emily should leave a room while he was present: indeed her partiality for him was so plainly seen, that she was frequently rallied on it.

There was an expression on Howard's face, which was difficult to define, and an embarrassment in his manner, which could not escape notice.

notice. Emma saw and wondered at it; but had scarcely time to form a conjecture on the cause, before he made his bow, and departed. The wonder was increased, when they were told, that Emily, finding herself very indifferent, had gone to bed. The idea of pain or sickness was enough for Emma. Forgetful of any offence to herself, she hastened to her bed-side, and kindly inquired her complaints. The sullen reply of "a head-ach" was all the answer she obtained.

For many days Emily confined herself to her room, scarcely taking any nourishment. Mr. and Mrs. Ferguson were alarmed, and pressed her to have advice. She refused, saying, advice would be ineffectual. When solicited to tell her complaint, she answered she could not, dared not, reveal it. "Why not, m^r dear Emily?" said her father:
"why

“ why will you not tell us, that we may administer to your relief? We live but for our children: in any thing, in every thing, we strive to promote your comfort and felicity, and can you enjoy either without health? Who so near, so dear to us, as you are? Speak your complaints, and let us try to mitigate them.”

Emily was inflexible, and continued keeping her room, with every appearance of illness. A physician was sent for, who pronounced her disorder, to be of the heart. Her mother, hearing this, again pressed her to discover her sentiments; assuring her, that, if the choice she had made was such as they could, in any degree, approve, they would not thwart her inclinations: “ be satisfied, my dear,” said her kind parent, “ that neither your father nor myself will raise objection to your union with any man, whose
character

character is not wholly despicable." After much persuasion, she at last consented, and declared, that Howard Mordaunt was the cause of her illness; that she loved him, and had every reason to believe she was beloved in return; her only fear was, that it might be disagreeable to sir James, who looked for a large fortune with his daughter.

Mrs. Ferguson was astonished; she had ever regarded Howard as the accepted lover of Emma; as such, had encouraged his visits: she had no objection to him for a son-in-law; on the contrary, he was just the man she would most have approved; but she hesitated, fearing her daughter should have deceived herself, and almost doubted her veracity. She questioned her very closely, and endeavoured to investigate the matter: Emily, however, had an answer ready

ready for all her questions. Art supplied the place of truth, and she gave such a colouring to every circumstance, that it was almost impossible to doubt: still Mrs. Ferguson deliberated; at length she said, "My dear Emily, I fear you have been led into an error; I fear you have deceived yourself into a belief of a regard, that exists but in your own imagination. Depend upon it, that Mr. Mordaunt has eyes but for miss Stanley; do not therefore, my dear child, either mislead yourself or us. Alas! I fear it is not the doubt you have of sir James's consent, that has reduced you to this state; why can you doubt what has never been tried? why anticipate a denial, that I am persuaded will not be made? To purchase our children's felicity, neither your father nor myself would think any price too great; but

do not, I again repeat, lead us into an error, or be the means of hurting the feelings of another."

Much of this kind of conversation passed. Mrs. Ferguson was not satisfied, that Howard had any real attachment to her daughter: she was anxious to know his real intentions as to Miss Stanley, and what expectations she had formed. This was a difficult task to undertake; she could not apply to Howard, and Emma was too guardedly delicate ever to make it a subject of conversation. Mrs. Ferguson, however, anxious to act for the best, took an opportunity of hinting to Miss Stanley her daughter's attachment.

Emma started at the idea; she had never attributed Emily's inclination to Howard to any thing more than a spirit of coquetry, which

which made her anxious to render all men lovers.

Mrs. Ferguson said, "she was charmed with the propriety of her daughter's choice, and the judgment and sentiment which had dictated it;" and added, "that she had spoken to her husband, who meant immediately to make proposals to sir James." Emma changed colour; which Mrs. Ferguson observing continued, "but I am not so secure of young Mr. Mordaunt; I rather think Emily has suffered her hopes to deceive her, and has attributed to serious intention, what was the mere effect of natural attention and gallantry. You, my dear Emma, can, I dare say, help me to some light on this subject: you are very intimate with his family, especially his sisters; and he is so excellent a brother, that I dare say he conceals no circumstance,
in

in which he is particularly interested, from them."

Emma gasped for breath : to be referred to in this manner seemed to imply a wish, that she would reveal the circumstances, in which she was so deeply interested ; yet, to confess, that Howard Mordaunt was her lover ; that she returned his affection, when there was no prospect of an union taking place betwixt them, she could not bring herself to do it. She contented herself with saying, " that she was not so far in Miss Mordaunt's confidence, as would lead them to disclose family secrets."

" Pardon me, my dear Emma," replied Mrs. Ferguson ; " into family secrets I would be the last to pry ; neither would I wish you to break a confidence reposed in you ; I only thought, that you might have heard Sir James's intention, respecting his son, mentioned,

mentioned, in a cursory way ; or that, in the common course of conversation, miss Mordaunts might have hinted at their brother's engagements, if he have any."

"Emma assured Mrs. Ferguson, that this was a subject never mentioned in her hearing."

"Well, then," replied her friend, "since you, my dear," and she laid a particular emphasis on the word *you*, "believe Mr. Mordaunt at liberty, I see nothing to hinder us making our proposals to his father ; but as we shall not immediately do so, should any thing transpire, to cause an alteration in your opinion, I should feel myself much indebted to you, to inform me of it, that so I may escape leading my husband and child into error ;" then without waiting a reply, she left the room.

Emma, thus left alone, reflected upon what had passed ; but her reflections afforded her no solace. She considered the personal beauty of Emily, the goodness of her family, and largeness of the fortune she was expected to possess, as circumstances of great weight with sir James ; and she felt, that such an union would be every way desirable to him ; his concurrence, then, would be readily obtained, and she did not doubt, but he would urge it with all the power of a parent. She feared, that Howard, impelled by the duty he owed his father, would to it sacrifice his own inclinations : “ perhaps,” said she, “ he will not feel any difficulty in giving me up. Alas ! how do I know but what his affections are already hers ? Has not his conduct several times given me room to suspect it ? Did not Mrs. Ferguson herself hint, that he

was by no means repugnant to the thoughts of this match? Ungenerous Howard! O! that I had never seen or known you! then should I have escaped the doubts, fears, and jealousies, which now so constantly harass me." With these uncomfortable feelings, she returned to her sister's chamber, who was now so far recovered, as to be able to meet the family at dinner. Emma dreaded it's being announced; she dreaded to encounter the eye of Mrs. Ferguson, which seemed to pierce her inmost thoughts. Nothing, however, was said farther on the subject.

Thus another week passed on; during which Howard Mordaunt had not made his appearance. She knew not how to account for his absence; she was only fearful, that Mr. Ferguson had laid his proposals before sir James, and that they were accepted.

She

She dreaded seeing Howard in the character of Emily's lover; and she did not doubt, but it was owing to the shame he would feel at appearing as the lover of one woman, when he had professed himself so to another, that hindered him from visiting them as usual.

END OF VOL. II.

4 DE 58

ERRATA.

- Page 81, line 6, *for now believe read now I believe*
 143, 16, — This *read Thus*
 152, 2, — *cousin read lady*
 188, 8, *the semicolon should be after heart, not after death*
 221, 12, *for momēt read moment*